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Denis Dural.

CHAPTER IV.

OUT OF THE DEPTHS.



THAT last night which he was to pass upon earth, M. de Saverne spent in a little tavern in Winchelsea, frequented by fishing people, and known to Bidois, who, even during the war, was in the constant habit of coming to England upon errands in which Mons. Grandpapa was very much interested—precentor, elder, perruquier, as he was.

The Count de Saverne had had some talk with the fisherman during the voyage from Boulogne, and more conversation took place on this last night, when the count took Bidois partly into his confidence; and, without mentioning the precise cause of his quarrel with M. de la Motte, said that it was inevitable; that the man was a villain who ought not to be allowed to pollute the earth; and that no criminal was ever more

righteously executed than this chevalier would be on the morrow, when it was agreed that the two were to meet.

The meeting would have taken place on that very night, but M. de la Motte demanded, as indeed he had a right to do, some hours for the settlement of his own affairs; and preferred to fight on French ground rather than English, as the survivor of the quarrel would be likely to meet with very rough treatment in this country.

La Motte betook himself then to arranging his papers. As for the Count de Saverne, he said all his dispositions were made. A dowry—that which his wife brought—would go to her child. His own property was devised to his own relations, and he could give the child nothing. He had only a few pieces in his purse, and, “Tenez,” says he, “this watch. Should anything befall me, I desire it may be given to the little boy who saved my—that is, her child.” And the voice of M. le Comte broke as he said these words, and the tears ran over his fingers. And the seaman wept too, as he told the story to me years after, nor were some of mine wanting, I think, for that poor heart-broken, wretched man, writhing in helpless agony, as the hungry sand drank his blood. Assuredly, the guilt of that blood was on thy head, Francis de la Motte.

The watch is ticking on the table before me as I write. It has been my companion of half a century. I remember my childish delight when Bidois brought it to me, and told my mother the tale of the meeting of the two gentlemen.

“You see her condition,” M. de la Motte said to my mother at this time. “We are separated for ever, as hopelessly as though one or other were dead. My hand slew her husband. Perhaps my fault destroyed her reason. I transmit misfortunes to those I love and would serve. Shall I marry her? I will if you think I can serve her. As long as a guinea remains to me, I will halve it with her. I have but very few left now. My fortune has crumbled under my hands, as have my friendships, my once bright prospects, my ambitions. I am a doomed man: somehow, I drag down those who love me into my doom.”

And so indeed there was a *Cain mark*, as it were, on this unhappy man. He *did* bring wreck and ruin on those who loved him. He was as a lost soul, I somehow think, whose tortures had begun already. Predestined to evil, to crime, to gloom; but now and again some one took pity upon this poor wretch, and amongst those who pitied him was my stern mother.

And here I may relate how it happened that I “saved” the child, for which act poor M. de Saverne rewarded me. Bidois no doubt told that story to M. le Comte in the course of their gloomy voyage. Mrs. Marthe, the countess’s attendant, had received or taken leave of absence one night, after putting the child and the poor lady, who was no better than a child, to bed. I went to my bed, and to sleep as boys sleep; and I forget what business called away my mother likewise, but when she came back to look for her poor Biche and the infant in its cradle—both were gone.

I have seen the incomparable Siddons, in the play, as, white and terrified, she passed through the darkened hall after King Duncan’s

murder. My mother's face wore a look of terror to the full as tragical, when, starting up from my boyish sleep, I sat up in my bed and saw her. She was almost beside herself with terror. The poor insane lady and her child were gone—who could say where? Into the marshes—into the sea—into the darkness—it was impossible to say whither the countess had fled.

"We must get up, my boy, and find them," says mother, in a hoarse voice; and I was sent over to Mr. Bliss's the grocer's in East Street where the chevalier lived, and where I found him sitting (with two priests, by the way, guests, no doubt, of Mr. Weston, at the Priory), and all these, and mother, on her side, with me following her, went out to look for the fugitives.

We went by pairs, taking different roads. Mother's was the right one as it appeared, for we had not walked many minutes, when we saw a white figure coming towards us, glimmering out of the dark, and heard a voice singing.

"Ah, mon Dieu!" says mother, and "Gott sey dank," and I know not what exclamations of gratitude and relief. It was the voice of the countess.

As we came up, she knew us with our light, and began to imitate, in her crazy way, the cry of the watchman, whom the poor sleepless soul had often heard under her windows. "Past twelve o'clock, a starlight night!" she sang, and gave one of her sad laughs.

When we came up to her, we found her in a white wrapper, her hair flowing down her back and over her poor pale face, and again she sang, "Past twelve o'clock."

The child was not with her. Mother trembled in every limb. The lantern shook so in her hand I thought she would drop it.

She put it down on the ground. She took her shawl off her back, and covered the poor lady with it, who smiled in her childish way, and said, "*C'est bon; c'est chaud ça; ah! que c'est bien!*"

As I chanced to look down at the lady's feet, I saw one of them was naked. Mother, herself in a dreadful agitation, embraced and soothed Madame de Saverne. "Tell me, my angel, tell me, my love, where is the child?" says mother, almost fainting.

"The child, what child? That little brat who always cries? I know nothing about children," says the poor thing. "Take me to my bed this moment, madam! How dare you bring me into the streets with naked feet!"

"Where have you been walking, my dear?" says poor mother, trying to soothe her.

"I have been to Great Saverne. I wore a domino. I knew the coachman quite well, though he was muffled up all but his nose. I was presented to Monseigneur the Cardinal. I made him such a curtesy—like this. Oh, my foot hurts me!"

She often rambled, about this ball and play, and hummed snatches

of tunes and little phrases of dialogue, which she may have heard there. Indeed, I believe it was the only play and ball the poor thing ever saw in her life; her brief life, her wretched life. 'Tis pitiful to think how unhappy it was. When I recall it, it tears my heart-strings somehow, as it doth to see a child in pain.

As she held up the poor bleeding foot, I saw that the edge of her dress was all wet, and covered *with sand*.

"Mother, mother!" said I, "she has been to the sea!"

"Have you been to the sea, Clarisse?" asks mother.

"J'ai été au bal; j'ai dansé; j'ai chanté. J'ai bien reconnu mon cocher. J'ai été au bal chez le Cardinal. But you must not tell M. de Saverne. Oh, no, you mustn't tell him!"

A sudden thought came to me. And, whenever I remember it, my heart is full of thankfulness to the gracious Giver of all good thoughts. Madame, of whom I was not afraid, and who sometimes was amused by my prattle, would now and then take a walk accompanied with Martha her maid, who held the infant, and myself who liked to draw it in its little carriage. We used to walk down to the shore, and there was a rock there, on which the poor lady would sit for hours.

"You take her home, mother," says I, all in a tremble. "You give me the lantern, and I'll go—I'll go"—I was off before I said where. Down I went, through Westgate; down I ran along the road towards the place I guessed at. When I had gone a few hundred yards, I saw in the road something white. It was *the countess's slipper*, that she had left there. I knew she had gone that way.

I got down to the shore, running with all my little might. The moon had risen by this time, shining gloriously over a great silver sea. A tide of silver was pouring in over the sand. Yonder was that rock where we often had sate. The infant was sleeping on it under the stars unconscious. He, Who loves little children, had watched over it . . . I scarce can see the words as I write them down. My little baby was waking. She had known nothing of the awful sea coming nearer with each wave; but she knew me as I came, and smiled, and warbled a little infant welcome. I took her up in my arms, and trotted home with my pretty burden. As I paced up the hill, M. de la Motte and one of the French clergymen met me. By ones and twos, the other searchers after my little wanderer came home from their quest. She was laid in her little crib, and never knew, until years later, the danger from which she had been rescued.

My adventures became known in our town, and I made some acquaintances who were very kind to me, and were the means of advancing me in after-life. I was too young to understand much what was happening round about me; but now, if the truth must be told, I must confess that old grandfather, besides his business of perruquier, which you will say is no very magnificent trade, followed others which were far less reputable. What do you say, for instance, of a church elder, who lends money *à la*

petite semaine, and at great interest? The fisherman, the market-people, nay, one or two farmers and gentlemen round about, were beholden to grandfather for supplies, and they came to his, to be *shaved* in more ways than one. No good came out of his gains, as I shall presently tell: but meanwhile his hands were for ever stretched out to claw other folks' money towards himself; and it must be owned that *madame sa bru* loved a purse too, and was by no means scrupulous as to the way of filling it. Monsieur le Chevalier de la Motte was free-handed and grand in his manner. He paid a pension, I know not how much, for the maintenance of poor Madame de Saverne. He had brought her to the strait in which she was, poor thing. Had he not worked on her, she never would have left her religion: she never would have fled from her husband: that fatal duel would never have occurred: right or wrong, he was the cause of her calamity, and he would make it as light as it might be. I know how, for years, extravagant and embarrassed as he was, he yet supplied means for handsomely maintaining the little Agnes when she was presently left an orphan in the world, when mother and father both were dead, and her relatives at home disowned her.

The ladies of Barr, Agnes's aunts, totally denied that the infant was their brother's child, and refused any contribution towards her maintenance. Her mother's family equally disavowed her. They had been taught the same story, and I suppose we believe willingly enough what we wish to believe. The poor lady was guilty. Her child had been born in her husband's absence. When his return was announced, she fled from her home, not daring to face him; and the unhappy Count de Saverne died by the pistol of the man who had already robbed him of his honour. La Motte had to bear this obloquy, or only protest against it by letters from England. He could not go home to Lorraine, where he was plunged in debt. "At least, Duval," said he to me, when I shook hands with him, and with all my heart forgave him, "mad and reckless as I have been, and fatal to all whom I loved; I have never allowed the child to want, and have supported her in comfort, when I was myself almost without a meal." A bad man no doubt this was; and yet not utterly wicked: a great criminal who paid an awful penalty. Let us be humble, who have erred too; and thankful, if we have a hope that we have found mercy.

I believe it was some braggart letter, which La Motte wrote to a comrade in M. de Vaux's camp, and in which he boasted of making the conversion of a *petite Protestante* at Strasbourg, which came to the knowledge of poor M. de Saverne, hastened his return home, and brought about this dreadful end. La Motte owned as much, indeed, in the last interview I ever had with him.

Who told Madame de Saverne of her husband's death? It was not for years after that I myself (unlucky chatterbox, whose tongue was always blabbing) knew what had happened. My mother thought that she must have overheard Bidois, the boatman, who told the whole

story over his glass of Geneva in our parlour. The countess's chamber was overhead, and the door left open. The poor thing used to be very angry at the notion of a locked door, and since that awful escapade to the sea shore, my mother slept in her room, or a servant whom she liked pretty well supplied mother's place.

In her condition the dreadful event affected her but little; and we never knew that she was aware of it until one evening when it happened that a neighbour, one of us French people of Rye, was talking over the tea-table, and telling us of a dreadful thing he had seen on Penenden Heath as he was coming home. He there saw *a woman burned at the stake* for the murder of her husband. The story is in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for the year 1769, and that will settle pretty well the date of the evening when our neighbour related the horrible tale to us.

Poor Madame de Saverne (who had a very grand air, and was perfectly like a lady) said quite simply, "In this case, my good Ursule, I shall be burned too. For you know I was the cause of my husband being killed. M. le Chevalier went and killed him in Corsica." And she looked round with a little smile, and nodded; and arranged her white dress with her slim hot hands.

When the poor thing spoke, the chevalier sank back as if he had been shot himself.

"Good night, neighbour Marion," groans mother; "she is very bad to-night. Come to bed, my dear, come to bed." And the poor thing followed mother, curtsying very finely to the company, and saying, quite softly, "Oui, oui, oui, they will burn me; they will burn me."

This idea seized upon her mind, and never left it. Madame la Comtesse passed a night of great agitation; talking incessantly. Mother and her maid were up with her all night. All night long we could hear her songs, her screams, her terrible laughter. . . . Oh, pitiful was thy lot in this world, poor guiltless, harmless lady. In thy brief years, how little happiness! For thy marriage portion only gloom, and terror, and submission, and captivity. The awful Will above us ruled it so. Poor frightened spirit! it has woke under serener skies now, and passed out of reach of our terrors, and temptations, and troubles.

At my early age I could only be expected to obey my elders and parents, and to consider all things were right which were done round about me. Mother's cuffs on the head I received without malice, and if the truth must be owned, had not seldom to submit to the *major* operation which my grandfather used to perform with a certain rod which he kept in a locked cupboard, and accompany with long wearisome sermons between each cut or two of his favourite instrument. These good people, as I gradually began to learn, bore but an indifferent reputation in the town which they inhabited, and were neither liked by the French of their own colony, nor by the English among whom we dwelt. Of course, being a simple little fellow, I honoured my father and mother as

became me—my grandfather and mother, that is—father being dead some years.

Grandfather, I knew, had a share in a fishing-boat, as numbers of people had, both at Rye and Winchelsea. Stokes, our fisherman, took me out once or twice, and I liked the sport very much: but it appeared that I ought to have said nothing about the boat and the fishing—for one night when we pulled out only a short way beyond a rock which we used to call the Bull Rock, from a pair of horns which stuck out of the water, and there we were hailed by my old friend Bidois, who had come from Boulogne in his lugger—and then . . . well then, I was going to explain the whole matter artlessly to one of our neighbours who happened to step into supper, when grandpapa (who had made a grace of five minutes long before taking the dish-cover off) fetched me a slap across the face which sent me reeling off my perch. And the chevalier who was supping with us only laughed at my misfortune.

This being laughed at somehow affected me more than the blows. I was used to those, from grandfather and mother too; but when people once had been kind to me I could not bear a different behaviour from them. And this gentleman certainly was. He improved my French very much, and used to laugh at my blunders and bad pronunciation. He took a good deal of pains with me when I was at home, and made me speak French like a little gentleman.

In a very brief time he learned English himself, with a droll accent, to be sure, but so as to express himself quite intelligibly. His head-quarters were at Winchelsea, though he would frequently be away at Deal, Dover, Canterbury, even London. He paid mother a pension for little Agnes, who grew apace, and was the most winning child I ever set eyes on. I remember, as well as yesterday, the black dress which was made for her after her poor mother's death, her pale cheeks, and the great solemn eyes gazing out from under the black curling ringlets which fell over her forehead and face.

Why do I make zigzag journeys? 'Tis the privilege of old age to be garrulous, and its happiness to remember early days. As I sink back in my arm-chair, safe and sheltered *post tot discrimina*, and happier than it has been the lot of most fellow-sinners to be, the past comes back to me—the stormy past, the strange unhappy yet happy past—and I look at it scared and astonished sometimes; as huntsmen look at the gaps and ditches over which they have leapt, and wonder how they are alive.

My good fortune in rescuing that little darling child caused the chevalier to be very kind to me; and when he was with us, I used to hang on to the skirts of his coat, and prattle for hours together, quite losing all fear of him. Except my kind namesake, the captain and admiral, this was the first *gentleman* I ever met in intimacy—a gentleman with many a stain, nay crime, to reproach him; but not all lost, I hope and pray. I own to having a kindly feeling towards that fatal man. I see myself a child prattling at his coat-skirts, and trotting along our roads and

marshes with him. I see him with his sad pale face, and a kind of *blighting* look he had, looking at that unconscious lady, at that little baby. My friends the Neapolitans would have called his an evil eye, and exorcised it accordingly. A favourite walk we had was to a house about a mile out of Winchelsea, where a grazing farmer lived. My delight then was to see, not his cattle, but his pigeons, of which he had a good stock, of croppers, pouters, runts, and turbits; and amongst these, I was told there were a sort of pigeons called carriers, which would fly for prodigious distances, returning from the place to which they were taken, though it were ever so distant, to that where they lived and were bred.

Whilst I was at Mr. Perreau's, one of these pigeons actually came in flying from the sea, as it appeared to me: and Perreau looked at it, and fondled it, and said to the chevalier, "There is nothing. It is to be at the old place." On which M. le Chevalier only said, "C'est bien," and as we walked away told me all he knew about pigeons, which, I daresay, was no great knowledge.

Why did he say there was nothing? I asked in the innocence of my prattle. The chevalier told me that these birds sometimes brought messages, written on a little paper, and tied under their wings, and that Perreau said there was nothing because there was nothing.

Oh, then! he sometimes *does* have messages with his birds? The chevalier shrugged his shoulder, and took a great pinch out of his fine snuff-box. "What did papa Duval do to you the other day when you began to talk too fast?" says he. "Learn to hold thy little tongue, Denis, mon garçon! If thou livest a little longer, and tellest all thou seest, the Lord help thee!" And I suppose our conversation ended here, and he strode home, and I trotted after him.

I narrate these things occurring in childhood by the help of one or two marks which have been left behind—as ingenious Tommy Thumb found his way home by the pebbles which he dropped along his line of march. Thus I happen to know the year when poor Madame de Saverne must have been ill, by referring to the date of the execution of the woman whom our neighbour saw burned on Penenden Heath. Was it days, was it weeks after this that Madame de Saverne's illness ended as all our illnesses will end one day?

During the whole course of her illness, whatever its length may have been, those priests from Slindon (or from Mr. Weston's the Popish gentleman's at the Priory) were constantly in our house, and I suppose created a great scandal among the Protestants of the town. M. de la Motte showed an extraordinary zeal in this business; and, sinner as he was, certainly was a most devout sinner, according to his persuasion. I do not remember, or was not cognizant, when the end came; but I remember my astonishment, as, passing by her open chamber door, I saw candles lighted before her bed, and some of those clergy watching there, and the Chevalier de la Motte kneeling in the passage in an attitude of deep contrition and grief.

On that last day there was, as it appeared, a great noise and disturbance round our house. The people took offence at the perpetual coming in and out of the priests, and on the very night when the coffin was to be taken from our house and the clergymen were performing the last services there, the windows of the room, where the poor lady lay, were broken in by a great volley of stones, and a roaring mob shouting, "No Popery, down with priests!"

Grandfather lost all courage at these threatening demonstrations, and screamed out at his *bru* for bringing all this persecution and danger upon him. "*Silence, misérable!*" says she. "Go sit in the back kitchen, and count your money-bags!" *She* at least did not lose her courage.

M. de la Motte, though not frightened, was much disturbed. The matter might be very serious. I did not know at the time how furiously angry our townspeople were with my parents for harbouring a Papist. Had they known that the lady was a converted Protestant, they would, doubtless, have been more violent still.

We were in a manner besieged in our house; the garrison being—the two priests in much terror; my grandfather, under the bed for what I know, or somewhere where he would be equally serviceable; my mother and the chevalier, with their wits about them; and little Denis Duval, no doubt very much in the way. When the poor lady died it was thought advisable to send her little girl out of the way; and Mrs. Weston at the Priory took her in, who belonged, as has before been said, to the ancient faith.

We looked out with no little alarm for the time when the hearse should come to take the poor lady's body away; for the people would not leave the street, and barricaded either end of it, having perpetrated no actual violence beyond the smashing of the windows as yet, but ready no doubt for more mischief.

Calling me to him, M. de la Motte said, "Denis, thou rememberest about the carrier pigeon the other day with nothing under his wing?" I remembered, of course.

"Thou shalt be my carrier pigeon. Thou shalt carry no letter, but a message. I can trust thee now with a secret." And I kept it, and will tell it now that the people are quite out of danger from *that* piece of intelligence, as I can promise you.

"You know Mr. Weston's house?" Know the house where Agnes was—the best house in the town? Of course I did. He named eight or ten houses besides Weston's at which I was to go and say, "The mackerel are coming in. Come as many of you as can." And I went to the houses, and said the words; and when the people said, "Where?" I said, "Opposite our house," and so went on.

The last and handsomest house (I had never been in it before) was Mr. Weston's, at the Priory: and there I went and called to see him. And I remember Mrs. Weston was walking up and down a gallery over the hall with a little crying child who would not go to sleep.

"Agnes, Agnes!" says I, and that baby was quiet in a minute, smiling, and crowing and flinging out her arms. Indeed, mine was the first name she could speak.

The gentlemen came out of their parlour, where they were over their pipes, and asked me, surly enough, "What I wanted?" I said, "The mackerel were out, and the crews were wanted before Peter Duval's the barber's." And one of them, with a scowl on his face, and an oath, said they would be there, and shut the door in my face.

As I went away from the Priory, and crossed the churchyard by the Rectory gate, who should come up but Doctor Barnard in his gig, with lamps lighted; and I always saluted him after he had been so kind to me, and had given me the books and the cake. "What," says he, "my little shrimper! Have you fetched any fish off the rocks to-night?"

"Oh, no, sir," says I. "I have been taking messages all round."

"And what message, my boy?"

I told him the message about the mackerel, &c.; but added, that I must not tell the names, for the chevalier had desired me not to mention them. And then I went on to tell how there was a great crowd in the street, and they were breaking windows at our house.

"Breaking windows? What for?" I told him what had happened. "Take Dolly to the stables. Don't say anything to your mistress, Samuel, and come along with me, my little shrimper," says the doctor. He was a very tall man in a great white wig. I see him now skipping over the tombstones, by the great ivy tower of the church, and so through the churchyard gate towards our house.

The hearse had arrived by this time. The crowd had increased, and there was much disturbance and agitation. As soon as the hearse came, a yell rose up from the people. "Silence. - Shame! Hold your tongue! Let the poor woman go in quiet," a few people said. These were the men of the mackerel fishery; whom the Weston gentlemen presently joined. But the fishermen were a small crowd; the townspeople were many and very angry. As we passed by the end of Port Street (where our house was) we could see the people crowding at either end of the street, and in the midst the great hearse with its black plumes before our door.

It was impossible that the hearse could pass through the crowd at either end of the street, if the people were determined to bar the way. I went in, as I had come, by the back gate of the garden, where the lane was still quite solitary, Doctor Barnard following me. We were awfully scared as we passed through the back kitchen (where the oven and boiler is) by the sight of an individual who suddenly leapt out of the copper, and who cried out, "O mercy, mercy, save me from the wicked men!" This was my grandpapa, and, with all respect for grandpapas (being of their age and standing myself now), I cannot but own that mine on this occasion cut rather a pitiful figure.

"Save my house! Save my property!" shouts my ancestor, and the doctor turns away from him scornfully, and passes on.

In the passage out of this back kitchen we met Monsieur de la Motte, who says, "Ah, c'est toi, mon garçon. Thou hast been on thy errands. Our people are well there!" and he makes a bow to the doctor, who came in with me, and who replied by a salutation equally stiff. M. de la Motte, reconnoitring from the upper room, had no doubt seen his people arrive. As I looked towards him I remarked that he was armed. He had a belt with pistols in it, and a sword by his side.

In the back room were the two Roman Catholic clergymen, and four men who had come with the hearse. They had been fiercely assailed as they entered the house with curses, shouts, hustling, and I believe even sticks and stones. My mother was serving them with brandy when we came in. She was astonished when she saw the rector make his appearance in our house. There was no love between his reverence and our family.

He made a very grand obeisance to the Roman Catholic clergymen. "Gentlemen," said he, "as rector of this parish, and magistrate of the county, I have come to keep the peace; and if there is any danger, to share it with you. The lady will be buried in the old churchyard, I hear. Mr. Trestles, are you ready to move?"

The men said they would be prepared immediately, and went to bring down their melancholy burden. "Open the door, you!" says the doctor. The people within shrank back. "I will do it," says mother.

"Et moi, parbleu!" says the chevalier, advancing, his hand on his hilt.

"I think, sir, I shall be more serviceable than you," says the doctor, very coldly. "If these gentlemen my confrères are ready, we will go out; I will go first, as rector of this parish." And mother drew the bolts, and he walked out and took off his hat.

A Babel roar of yells, shouts, curses, came pouring into the hall as the door opened, and the doctor remained on the steps, bareheaded and undaunted.

"How many of my parishioners are here? Stand aside all who come to my church!" he called out very bold.

At this arose immense roars of "No Popery! down with the priests! down with them! drown them!" and I know not what more words of hatred and menace.

"You men of the French church," shouted out the doctor, "are you here?"

"We are here; down with Popery," roar the Frenchmen.

"Because you were persecuted a hundred years ago, you want to persecute in your turn. Is that what your Bible teaches you? Mine doesn't. When your church wanted repair, I gave you my nave, where you had your service, and were welcome. Is this the way you repay kindness which has been shown to you, you who ought to know better? For shame on you! I say, for shame! Don't try and frighten me. Roger Hooker, I know you, you poaching vagabond; who kept your wife and children when you were at Lewes Gaol? How dare you be persecuting

anybody, Thomas Flint? As sure as my name is Barnard, if you stop this procession, I will commit you to-morrow."

Here was a cry of "Huzzay for the doctor! huzzay for the rector!" which I am afraid came from the *mackerels*, who were assembled by this time, and were not mum, as fish generally are.

"Now, gentlemen, advance, if you please!" This he said to the two foreign clergymen, who came forward courageously enough, the Chevalier de la Motte walking behind them. "Listen, you friends and parishioners, Churchmen and Dissenters! These two foreign dissenting clergymen are going to bury, in a neighbouring churchyard, a departed sister, as you foreign dissenters have buried your own dead without harm or hindrance; and I will accompany these gentlemen to the grave prepared for the deceased lady, and I will see her laid in peace there, as surely as I hope myself to lie in peace."

Here the people shouted; but it was with admiration for the rector. There was no outcry any more. The little procession fell into an orderly rank, passed through the streets, and round the Protestant church to the old burying-ground behind the house of the Priory. The rector walked between the two Roman Catholic clergymen. I imagine the scene before me now—the tramp of the people, the flicker of a torch or two; and then we go in at the gate of the Priory ground into the old graveyard of the monastery, where a grave had been dug, on which the stone still tells that Clarissa, born de Viomesnil, and widow of Francis Stanislas, Count of Sarverne and Barr in Lorraine, lies buried beneath.

When the service was ended, the Chevalier de la Motte (by whose side I stood, holding by his cloak) came up to the doctor. "Monsieur le Docteur," says he, "you have acted like a gallant man; you have prevented bloodshed——"

"I am fortunate, sir," says the doctor.

"You have saved the lives of these two worthy ecclesiastics, and rescued from insult the remains of one——"

"Of whom I know the sad history," says the doctor, very gravely.

"I am not rich, but will you permit me to give this purse for your poor?"

"Sir, it is my duty to accept it," replied the doctor. The purse contained a hundred louis, as he afterwards told me.

"And may I ask to take your hand, sir?" cries the poor chevalier, clasping his own together.

"No, sir!" said the doctor, putting his own hands behind his back. "Your hands have that on them which the gift of a few guineas cannot wash away." The doctor spoke a very good French. "My child, good night; and the best thing I can wish thee is to wish thee out of the hands of that man."

"Monsieur!" says the chevalier, laying his hand on his sword mechanically.

"I think, sir, the last time it was with the pistol you showed your

skill!" says Doctor Barnard, and went in at his own wicket as he spoke, leaving poor La Motte like a man who has just been struck with a blow; and then he fell to weeping and crying that the curse—the curse of Cain was upon him.

"My good boy," the old rector said to me in after days, while talking over these adventures, "thy friend the chevalier was the most infernal scoundrel I ever set eyes on, and I never looked at his foot without expecting to see it was cloven."

"And could he tell me anything about the poor countess?" I asked. He knew nothing. He saw her but once, he thought. "And faith," says he, with an arch look, "it so happened that I was not too intimate with your *own* worthy family."

CHAPTER V.

I HEAR THE SOUND OF BOW BELLS.

WHATEVER may have been the rector's dislike to my parents, in respect of us juniors and my dear little Agnes de Saverne he had no such prejudices, and both of us were great favourites with him. He considered himself to be a man entirely without prejudices; and towards Roman Catholics he certainly was most liberal. He sent his wife to see Mrs. Weston, and an acquaintance was made between the families, who had scarcely known each other before. Little Agnes was constantly with these Westons, with whom the Chevalier de la Motte also became intimate. Indeed, we have seen that he must have known them already, when he sent me on the famous "mackerel" message which brought together a score at least of townspeople. I remember Mrs. Weston as a frightened-looking woman, who seemed as if she had a ghost constantly before her. Frightened, however, or not, she was always kind to my little Agnes.

The younger of the Weston brothers (he who swore at me the night of the burial) was a red-eyed, pimple-faced, cock-fighting gentleman for ever on the trot, and known, I daresay not very favourably, all the country round. They were said to be gentlemen of good private means. They lived in a pretty genteel way, with a post-chaise for the lady, and excellent nags to ride. They saw very little company; but this may have been because they were Roman Catholics, of whom there were not many in the county, except at Arundel and Slindon, where the lords and ladies were of too great quality to associate with a pair of mere fox-hunting, horse-dealing squires. M. de la Motte, who was quite the fine gentleman, as I have said, associated with these people freely enough: but then he had interests in common with them, which I began to understand when I was some ten or a dozen years old, and used to go to see my little Agnes at the Priory. She was growing apace to be a fine lady. She had dancing-masters,

music-masters, language-masters (those foreign *tonsured* gentry who were always about the Priory), and was so tall that mother talked of putting powder in her hair. Ah, belle dame! another hand hath since whitened it, though I love it ebony or silver!

I continued at Rye School, boarding with Mr. Rudge and his dram-drinking daughter, and got a pretty fair smattering of such learning as was to be had at the school. I had a fancy to go to sea, but Doctor Barnard was strong against that wish of mine: unless indeed I should go out of Rye and Winchelsea altogether—get into a King's ship, and perhaps on the quarter-deck, under the patronage of my friend Sir Peter Denis, who ever continued to be kind to me.

Every Saturday night I trudged home from Rye, as gay as schoolboy could be. After Madame de Saverne's death the Chevalier de la Motte took our lodgings on the first floor. He was of an active disposition, and found business in plenty to occupy him. He would be absent from his lodgings for weeks and months. He made journeys on horseback into the interior of the country; went to London often; and sometimes abroad with our fishermen's boats. As I have said, he learned our language well, and taught me his. Mother's German was better than her French, and my book for reading the German was Doctor Luther's Bible; indeed, that very volume in which poor M. de Saverne wrote down his prayer for the child whom he was to see only twice in this world.

Though Agnes's little chamber was always ready at our house, where she was treated like a little lady, having a servant specially attached to her, and all the world to spoil her, she passed a great deal of time with Mrs. Weston, of the Priory, who took a great affection for the child even before she lost her own daughter. I have said that good masters were here found for her. She learned to speak English as a native, of course, and French and music from the fathers who always were about the house. Whatever the child's expenses or wants were, M. de la Motte generously defrayed them. After his journeys he would bring her back toys, sweetmeats, knick-knacks fit for a little duchess. She lorded it over great and small in the Priory, in the *Perruquery*, as we may call my mother's house, ay, and in the Rectory too, where Dr. and Mrs. Barnard were her very humble servants, like all the rest of us.

And here I may as well tell you that I was made to become a member of the Church of England, because mother took huff at our French Protestants, who would continue persecuting her for harbouring the papists, and insisted that between the late poor countess and the chevalier there had been an unlawful intimacy. M. Borel, our pastor, preached at poor mother several times, she said. I did not understand his inuendos, being a simple child, I fear not caring much for sermons in those days. For grandpapa's I know I did not; he used to give us half an hour at morning, and half an hour at evening. I could not help thinking of grandfather skipping out of the copper, and calling on us to spare his life on that day

of the funeral; and his preaching went in at one ear and out at t'other. One day—àpropos of some pomatum which a customer wanted to buy, and which I know mother made with lard and bergamot herself—I heard him tell such a fib to a customer, that somehow I never could respect the old man afterwards. He actually said the pomatum had just come to him from France direct—from the Dauphin's own hair-dresser: and our neighbour, I daresay, would have bought it, but I said, "Oh, grandpapa, you must mean some other pomatum! I saw mother make this with her own hands." Grandfather actually began to cry when I said this. He said I was being his death. He asked that somebody should fetch him out and hang him that moment. Why is there no bear, says he, to eat that little monster's head off and destroy that prodigy of crime? Nay, I used to think I *was* a monster sometimes: he would go on so fiercely about my wickedness and perverseness.

Doctor Barnard was passing by our pole one day, and our open door, when grandfather was preaching upon this sin of mine, with a strap in one hand, laying over my shoulders in the intervals of the discourse. Down goes the strap in a minute, as the doctor's lean figure makes its appearance at the door; and grandfather begins to smirk and bow, and hope his reverence was well. My heart was full. I had had sermon in the morning, and sermon at night, and strapping every day that week; and heaven help me, I loathed that old man, and loathe him still.

"How can I, sir," says I, bursting out into a passion of tears; "how can I honour my grandfather and mother if grandfather tells such d—lies as he does?" And I stamped with my feet, trembling with wrath and indignation at the disgrace put upon me. I then burst out with my story, which there was no controverting; and I will say grandfather looked at me as if he would kill me; and I ended my tale sobbing at the doctor's knees.

"Listen, Mr. Duval," says Dr. Barnard, very sternly; "I know a great deal more than you think about you and your doings. My advice to you is to treat this child well, and to leave off some practices which will get you into trouble, as sure as your name is what it is. I know where your pigeons go to, and where they come from. And some day, when I have you in my justice-room, we shall see whether I will show you any more mercy than you have shown to this child. I know you to be . . ." and the doctor whispered something into grandfather's ear, and stalked away.

Can you guess by what name the doctor called my grandfather. If he called him hypocrite, *ma foi*, he was not far wrong. But the truth is he called him smuggler, and that was a name which fitted hundreds of people along our coast, I promise you. At Hythe, at Folkestone, at Dover, Deal, Sandwich, there were scores and scores of these gentry. All the way to London they had dépôts, friends, and correspondents. Inland and along the Thames there were battles endless between them and the revenue people. Our friends "the mackerel," who came out at Monsieur de la Motte's summons, of course were of this calling. One day when he came home from one of his expeditions, I remember jumping forward

to welcome him, for he was at one time very kind to me, and as I ran into his arms he started back, and shrieked out an oath and a *sacred-blue* or two. He was wounded in the arm. There had been a regular battle at Deal between the dragoons and revenue officers on the one side, and the smugglers and their friends. Cavalry had charged cavalry, and Monsieur de la Motte (his smuggling name, he told me afterwards, was Mr. Paul, or Pole) had fought on the *mackerel* side.

So were my gentlemen at the Priory of the Mackerel party. Why, I could name you great names of merchants and bankers at Canterbury, Dover, Rochester, who were engaged in this traffic. My grandfather, you see, howled with the wolves; but then he used to wear a smug *lamb's-skin* over his wolf's hide. Ah, shall I thank Heaven like the Pharisee, that I am not as those men are? I hope there is no harm in being thankful that I have been brought out of temptation; that I was not made a rogue at a child's age; and that I did not come to the gallows as a man. Such a fate has befallen more than one of the precious friends of my youth, as I shall have to relate in due season.

That habit I had of speaking out everything that was on my mind brought me, as a child, into innumerable scrapes, but I do thankfully believe has preserved me from still greater. What could you do with a little chatterbox, who, when his grandfather offered to sell a pot of pomatum as your true Pommade de Cythère, must cry out, "No, grand-papa, mother made it with marrow and bergamot?" If anything happened, which I was not to mention, I was sure to blunder out some account of it. Good Doctor Barnard, and my patron Captain Denis (who was a great friend of our rector), I suppose, used to joke about this propensity of mine, and would laugh for ten minutes together, as I told my stories; and I think the doctor had a serious conversation with my mother on the matter; for she said, "He has reason. The boy shall not go any more. We will try and have *one* honest man in the family."

Go any more *where*? Now I will tell you (and I am much more ashamed of this than of the barber's pole, Monsieur mon fils, that I can promise you). When I was boarding at the grocer's at Rye, I and other boys were constantly down at the water, and we learned to manage a boat pretty early. Rudge did not go out himself, being rheumatic and lazy, but his apprentice would be absent frequently all night; and on more than one occasion I went out as odd boy in the boat to put my hand to anything.

Those pigeons I spoke of anon came from Boulogne. When one arrived he brought a signal that our Boulogne correspondent was on his way, and we might be on the look-out. The French boat would make for a point agreed upon, and we lie off until she came. We took cargo from her: barrels without number, I remember. Once we saw her chased away by a revenue cutter. Once the same ship fired at us. I did not know what the balls were, which splashed close alongside of us; but I remember the apprentice of Rudge's (he used to make love to Miss R.,

and married her afterwards), singing out, "Lord, have mercy," in an awful consternation, and the chevalier crying out, "Hold your tongue, misérable! You were never born to be drowned or shot." He had some hesitation about taking me out on this expedition. He was engaged in running smuggled goods, that is the fact; and "smuggler" was the word which Doctor Barnard whispered in my grandfather's ear. If we were hard pressed at certain points which we knew, and could ascertain by cross-bearings which we took, we would sink our kegs till a more convenient time, and then return and drag for them, and bring them up with line and grapnel.

I certainly behaved much better when we were fired at, than that oaf of a Bevil, who lay howling his "Lord, have mercy upon us," at the bottom of the boat; but somehow the chevalier discouraged my juvenile efforts in the smuggling line, from his fear of that unlucky tongue of mine, which would blab everything I knew. I may have been out *afishing* half-a-dozen times in all; but especially after we had been fired at, La Motte was for leaving me at home. My mother was averse, too, to my becoming a seaman (a smuggler) by profession. Her aim was to make a gentleman of me, she said, and I am most unfeignedly thankful to her for keeping me out of mischief's way. Had I been permitted to herd along with the black sheep, Doctor Barnard would never have been so kind to me as he was; and indeed that good man showed me the greatest favour. When I came home from school he would often have me to the Rectory, and hear me my lessons, and he was pleased to say I was a lively boy of good parts.

The doctor received rents for his college at Oxford, which has considerable property in these parts, and twice a year would go to London and pay the moneys over. In my boyish times these journeys to London were by no means without danger; and if you will take a *Gentleman's Magazine* from the shelf you will find a highway-robbery or two in every month's chronicle. We boys at school were never tired of talking of highwaymen and their feats. As I often had to walk over to Rye from home of a night (so as to be in time for early morning school), I must needs buy a little brass-barrelled pistol, with which I practised in secret, and which I had to hide, lest mother or Rudge, or the schoolmaster, should take it away from me. Once as I was talking with a schoolfellow, and vapouring about what we would do, were we attacked, I fired my pistol and shot away a piece of his coat. I might have hit his stomach, not his coat—Heaven be good to us!—and this accident made me more careful in the use of my artillery. And now I used to practise with small shot instead of bullets, and pop at sparrows whenever I could get a chance.

At Michaelmas, in the year 1776 (I promise you I remember the year), my dear and kind friend, Doctor Barnard, having to go to London with his rents, proposed to take me to London to see my other patron, Sir Peter Denis, between whom and the doctor there was a great friendship: and it is to those dear friends that I owe the great good fortune

which has befallen me in life. Indeed when I think of what I might have been, and of what I have escaped, my heart is full of thankfulness for the great mercies which have fallen to my share. Well, at this happy and eventful Michaelmas of 1776, Doctor Barnard says to me, "Denis, my child, if thy mother will grant leave I have a mind to take thee to see thy godfather, Sir Peter Denis, in London. I am going up with my rents, my neighbour Weston will share the horses with me, and thou shalt see the Tower and Mrs. Salmons' wax-work before thou art a week older."

You may suppose that this proposition made Master Denis Duval jump for joy. Of course I had heard of London all my life, and talked with people who had been there, but that I should go myself to Admiral Sir Peter Denis's house, and see the play, St. Paul's, and Mrs. Salmons, here was a height of bliss I never had hoped to attain. I could not sleep for thinking of my pleasure: I had some money, and I promised to buy as many toys for Agnes as the chevalier used to bring her. My mother said I should go like a gentleman, and turned me out in a red waistcoat with plate buttons, a cock to my hat, and ruffles to my shirts. How I counted the hours of the night before our departure! I was up before the dawn, packing my little valise. I got my little brass-barrelled pocket-pistol, and I loaded it with shot. I put it away into my breast-pocket; and if we met with a highwayman I promised myself he should have my charge of lead in his face. The doctor's postchaise was at his stables not very far from us. The stable lanterns were alight, and Brown, the doctor's man, cleaning the carriage, when Mr. Denis Duval comes up to the stable door, lugging his portmanteau after him through the twilight. Was ever daylight so long a-coming? Ah! There come the horses at last; the horses from the King's Head, and old Pascoe, the one-eyed postilion. How well I remember the sound of their hoofs in that silent street! I can tell everything that happened on that day; what we had for dinner—viz. veal cutlets and French beans, at Maidstone; where we changed horses, and the colour of the horses. "Here, Brown! Here's my portmanteau! I say, where shall I stow it?" My portmanteau was about as large as a good-sized apple-pie. I jump into the carriage and we drive up to the Rectory: and I think the doctor will never come out. There he is at last: with his mouth full of buttered toast, and I bob my head to him a hundred times out of the chaise window. Then I must jump out, forsooth. "Brown, shall I give you a hand with the luggage?" says I, and I daresay they all laugh. Well, I am so happy that anybody may laugh who likes. The doctor comes out, his precious box under his arm. I see dear Mrs. Barnard's great cap nodding at us out of the parlour window as we drive away from the Rectory door to stop a hundred yards farther on at the Priory.

There at the parlour window stands my dear little Agnes, in a white frock, in a great cap with a blue riband and bow, and curls clustering over her face. I wish Sir Joshua Reynolds had painted thee in those days, my

dear: but thou wert the very image of one of his little ladies, that one who became Duchess of Buccleugh afterwards. There is my Agnes, and now presently comes out Mr. Weston's man and luggage, and it is fixed on the roof. Him his master, Mr. James Weston, follows. This was the most good-natured of the two, and I shall never forget my sensation of delight, when I saw him bring out two holster pistols, which he placed each in a pocket of the chaise. Is Tommy Chapman, the apothecary's son of Westgate, alive yet, and does he remember my wagging my head to him as our chaise whirled by? He was shaking a mat at the door of his father's shop as my lordship accompanied with my noble friends passed by.

First stage, Ham Street. The Bear. A grey horse and a bay to change, I remember them. Second stage, Ashford. Third stage I think I am asleep about the third stage: and no wonder, a poor little wretch who had been awake half the night before, and no doubt many nights previous, thinking of this wonderful journey. Fourth stage, Maidstone, the Bell. "And here we will stop to dinner, Master Shrimpeatcher," says the doctor, and I jump down out of the carriage nothing loth. The doctor followed with his box, of which he never lost sight.

The doctor liked his ease in his inn, and took his sip of punch so comfortably, that I, for my part, thought he never would be gone. I was out in the stables and looking at the horses, and talking to the ostler who was rubbing his nags down. I daresay I had a peep into the kitchen, and at the pigeons in the inn yard, and at all things which were to be seen at the Bell, while my two companions were still at their interminable punch. It was an old-fashioned inn, with a gallery round the court-yard. Heaven bless us! Falstaff and Bardolph may have stopped there on the road to Gadshill. I was in the stable looking at the nags, when Mr. Weston comes out of the inn, looks round the court, opens the door of the post-chaise, takes out his pistols, looks at the priming, and puts them back again. Then we are off again, and time enough too. It seemed to me many hours since we had arrived at that creaking old Bell. And away we go through Addington, Eynesford, by miles and miles of hop-gardens. I daresay I did not look at the prospect much, beautiful though it might be, my young eyes being for ever on the look-out for Saint Paul's and London.

For a great part of the way Doctor Barnard and his companion had a fine controversy about their respective religions, for which each was alike zealous. Nay: it may be the rector invited Mr. Weston to take a place in his post-chaise in order to have this battle, for he never tired of arguing the question between the two churches. Towards the close of the day Master Denis Duval fell asleep on Dr. Barnard's shoulder, and the good-natured clergyman did not disturb him.

I woke up with the sudden stoppage of the carriage. The evening was falling. We were upon a lonely common, and a man on horseback was at the window of the post-chaise.

"Give us out that there box! and your money!" I heard him say

in a very gruff voice. O heavens! we were actually stopped by a highwayman! It was delightful.

Mr. Weston jumped at his pistols very quick. "Here's our money, you scoundrel!" says he, and he fired point-blank at the rogue's head. Confusion! The pistol missed fire. He aimed the second, and again no report followed!

"Some scoundrel has been tampering with these," says Mr. Weston, aghast.

"Come," says Captain Macheath, "come, your——"

But the next word the fellow spoke was a frightful oath; for I took out my little pistol, which was full of shot, and fired it into his face. The man reeled, and I thought would have fallen out of his saddle. The postilion, frightened no doubt, clapped spurs to his horse, and began to gallop. "Shan't we stop and take that rascal, sir?" said I to the doctor. On which Mr. Weston gave a peevish kind of push at me, and said, "No, no. It is getting quite dark. Let us push on." And, indeed, the highwayman's horse had taken fright, and we could see him galloping away across the common.

I was so elated to think that I, a little boy, had shot a live highwayman, that I daresay I bragged outrageously of my action. We set down Mr. Weston at his inn in the Borough, and crossed London Bridge, and there I was in London at last. Yes, and that was the Monument, and then we came to the Exchange, and yonder, yonder was St. Paul's. We went up Holborn, and so to Ormond Street, where my patron lived in a noble mansion; and where his wife, my Lady Denis, received me with a great deal of kindness. You may be sure the battle with the highwayman was fought over again, and I got due credit from myself and others for my gallantry.

Sir Peter and his lady introduced me to a number of their acquaintances as the little boy who shot the highwayman. They received a great deal of company, and I was frequently had in to their dessert. I suppose I must own that my home was below in the housekeeper's room with Mrs. Jellicoe; but my lady took such a fancy to me that she continually had me upstairs, took me out driving in her chariot, or ordered one of the footmen to take me to the sights of the town, and sent me in his charge to the play. It was the last year Garrick performed; and I saw him in the play of Macbeth, in a gold-laced blue coat, with scarlet plush waistcoat and breeches. Ormond Street, Bloomsbury, was on the outskirts of the town then, with open country behind, stretching as far as Hampstead. Bedford House, north of Bloomsbury Square, with splendid gardens, was close by, and Montague House, where I saw stuffed camel-leopards, and all sorts of queer things from foreign countries. Then there were the Tower, and the Wax-work, and Westminster Abbey, and Vauxhall. What a glorious week of pleasure it was! At the week's end the kind doctor went home again, and all those dear kind people gave me presents, and cakes, and money, and spoiled the little boy who shot the highwayman.

The affair was actually put into the newspapers, and who should come to hear of it but my gracious sovereign himself. One day, Sir Peter Denis took me to see Kew Gardens and the new Chinese pagoda her Majesty had put up. Whilst walking here, and surveying this pretty place, I had the good fortune to see his M-j-sty, walking with our most gracious Qu—n, the Pr—nce of W—s, the *Bishop of Osnaburg*, my namesake, and, I think, two, or it may be three, of the Princesses. Her M-j-sty knew Sir Peter from having sailed with him, saluted him very graciously, and engaged him in conversation. And the Best of Monarchs, looking towards his humblest subject and servant, said, "What, what? Little boy shot the highwayman. Shot him in the face. Shot him in the face!" On which the youthful Pr—nces graciously looked towards me, and the King asking Sir Peter what my profession was to be, the admiral said I hoped to be a sailor and serve his Majesty.

I promise you I was a mighty grand personage when I went home; and both at Rye and Winchelsea scores of people asked me what the King said. On our return, we heard of an accident which had happened to Mr. Joseph Weston, which ended most unhappily for that gentleman. On the very day when we set out for London he went out shooting—a sport of which he was very fond; but in climbing a hedge, and dragging his gun incautiously after him, the lock caught in a twig, and the piece discharged itself into the poor gentleman's face, lodging a number of shot into his left cheek, and into his eye, of which he lost the sight, after suffering much pain and torture.

"Bless my soul! A charge of small shot in his face! What an extraordinary thing!" cries Dr. Barnard, who came down to see mother and grandfather the day after our return home. Mrs. Barnard had told him of the accident at supper on the night previous. Had he been shot or shot some one himself, the doctor could scarce have looked more scared. He put me in mind of Mr. Garrick, whom I had just seen at the playhouse, London, when he comes out after murdering the king.

"You look, docteur, as if you done it yourself," says M. de la Motte, laughing, and in his English jargon. "Two time, three time, I say, Weston, you shoot yourself, you carry you gun that way, and he say he not born to be shot, and he swear!"

"But my good chevalier, Doctor Blades picked some bits of crape out of his eye, and thirteen or fourteen shot. What is the size of your shot, Denny, with which you fired at the highwayman?"

"*Quid autem vides festucam in oculo fratris tui*, doctor?" says the chevalier; "that is good doctrine—Protestant or Popish, eh?" On which the doctor held down his head, and said, "Chevalier, I am corrected; I was wrong—very wrong."

"And as for crape," La Motte resumed, "Weston is in mourning. He go to funeral at Canterbury four days ago. Yes, he tell me so. He and my friend Lutterloh go." This Mr. Lutterloh was a German living near Canterbury, with whom M. de la Motte had dealings. He had dealings

with all sorts of people ; and very queer dealings, too, as I began to understand now that I was a stout boy approaching fourteen years of age, and standing pretty tall in my shoes.

De la Motte laughed then at the doctor's suspicions. "Parsons and women all the same, save your respect, ma bonne Madame Duval, all tell tales ; all believe evil of their neighbours. I tell you I see Weston shoot twenty, thirty time. Always drag his gun through hedge."

"But the crape——?"

"Bah ! Always in mourning, Weston is ! For shame of your *cancans*, little Denis ! Never think such thing again. Don't make Weston your enemy. If a man say that of me, I would shoot him myself, parbleu !"

"But if he has done it?"

"Parbleu ! I would shoot him so much *ze mor* !" says the chevalier, with a stamp of his foot. And the first time he saw me alone he reverted to the subject. "Listen, Denisol !" says he ; "thou becomest a great boy. Take my counsel, and hold thy tongue. This suspicion against Mr. Joseph is a monstrous crime, as well as a folly. A man say that of me—right or wrong—I burn him the brain. Once I come home, and you run against me, and I cry out, and swear and pest. I was wounded myself, I deny it not."

"And I said nothing, sir," I interposed.

"No, I do thee justice ; thou didst say nothing. You know the *métier* we make sometimes ? That night in the boat " (*zat* night in *ze* boat," he used to say), "when the revenue cutter fire, and your poor grandpapa howl—ah, how he howl. You don't suppose we were there to look for lobster-pot, eh ? Tu n'as pas bronché, toi. You did not crane ; you show yourself a man of heart. And now, *petit*, apprends à te taire !" And he gave me a shake of the hand, and a couple of guineas in it too, and went off to his stables on his business. He had two or three horses now, and was always on the trot ; he was very liberal with his money, and used to have handsome entertainments in his upstairs room, and never quarrelled about the bills which mother sent in. "Hold thy tongue, Denisol," said he. "Never tell who comes in or who goes out. And mind thee, child, if thy tongue wags, little birds come whisper me, and say, 'He tell.'"

I tried to obey his advice, and to rein in that truant tongue of mine. When Dr. and Mrs. Barnard themselves asked me questions I was mum, and perhaps rather disappointed the good lady and the rector too by my reticence. For instance, Mrs. Barnard would say, "That was a nice goose I saw going from market to your house, Denny."

"Goose is very nice, ma'am," says I.

"The chevalier often has dinners?"

"Dines every day, regular, ma'am."

"Sees the Westons a great deal?"

"Yes, ma'am," I say, with an indescribable heart-pang. And the

cause of that pang I may as well tell. You see, though I was only thirteen years old, and Agnes but eight, I loved that little maid with all my soul and strength. Boy or man I never loved any other woman. I write these very words by my study fire in Fareport with madam opposite dozing over her novel till the neighbours shall come in to tea and their rubber. When my ink is run out, and my little tale is written, and yonder church that is ringing to seven o'clock prayer shall toll for a certain D. D., you will please, good neighbours, to remember that I never loved any but yonder lady, and keep a place by Darby for Joan, when her turn shall arrive.

Now in the last year or two, since she had been adopted at the Priory, Agnes came less and less often to see us. She did not go to church with us, being a Catholic. She learned from the good fathers her tutors. She learned music and French and dancing to perfection. All the county could not show a finer little lady. When she came to our shop, it was indeed a little countess honouring us with a visit. Mother was gentle before her—grandfather obsequious—I, of course, her most humble little servant. Wednesday (a half-holiday), and half Saturday, and all Sunday I might come home from school, and how I used to trudge, and how I longed to see that little maiden, any gentleman may imagine who has lost his heart to an Agnes of his own.

The first day of my arrival at home, after the memorable London journey, I presented myself at the Priory, with my pocket full of presents for Agnes. The footman let me into the hall civilly enough: but the young lady was out with Mrs. Weston in the post-chaise. I might leave my message.

I wanted to *give* my message. Somehow, in that fortnight's absence from home, I had so got to long after Agnes that I never had my little sweetheart quite out of my mind. It may have been a silly thing, but I got a little pocket-book, and wrote in French a journal of all I saw in London. I daresay there were some pretty faults in grammar. I remember a fine paragraph about my meeting the royal personages at Kew, and all their names written down in order; and this little pocket-book I must needs send to Mademoiselle de Saverne.

The next day I called again. Still Mademoiselle de Saverne was not to be seen: but in the evening a servant brought a little note from her, in which she thanked her dear brother for his beautiful book. That was some consolation. She liked the pocket-book anyhow. I wonder, can you young people guess what I did to it before I sent it away? Yes, I did. "One, tree, feefy time," as the chevalier would say. The next morning, quite early, I had to go back to school, having promised the doctor to work hard after my holiday; and work I did with a will, at my French and my English, and my Navigation. I thought Saturday would never come: but it did at last, and I trotted as quick as legs would carry me from school to Winchelsea. My legs were growing apace now; and especially as they took me homewards, few could outrun them.

All good women are match-makers at heart. My dear Mrs. Barnard saw quite soon what my condition of mind was, and was touched by my boyish fervour. I called once, twice, thrice, at the Priory, and never could get a sight of Miss Agnes. The servant used to shrug his shoulder and laugh at me in an insolent way, and the last time—"You need not call any more. We don't want our hair cut here, nor no pomatum, nor no soap, do you understand that?" and he slammed the door in my face. I was stunned by this insolence, and beside myself with rage and mortification. I went to Mrs. Barnard and told her what had happened to me. I burst into tears of passion and grief as I flung myself on a sofa by the good ladies. I told her how I had rescued little Agnes, how I loved the little thing better than all the world. I spoke my heart out, and eased it somewhat, for the good lady wiped her eyes more than once, and finished by giving me a kiss. She did more; she invited me to tea with her on the next Wednesday when I came home from school, and who should be there but little Agnes. She blushed very much. Then she came towards me. Then she held up her little cheek to be kissed, and then she cried—oh, how she did cry! There were three people whimpering in that room. (How well I recollect it opening into the garden, and the little old blue dragon tea-cups and silver pot!) There were three persons, I say, crying: a lady of fifty, a boy of thirteen, and a little girl of seven years of age. Can you guess what happened next? Of course the lady of fifty remembered that she had forgotten her spectacles, and went upstairs to fetch them; and then the little maiden began to open her heart to me, and told her dear Denny how she had been longing to see him, and how they were very angry with him at the Priory; so angry that his name was never to be spoken. "The chevalier said that, and so did the gentlemen—especially Mr. Joseph, who had been dreadful since his accident, and one day (says my dear) when you called, he was behind the door with a great horse-whip, and said he would let you in, and flog your soul out of your body, only Mrs. Weston cried, and Mr. James said, 'Don't be a fool, Joe.' But something you have done to Mr. Joseph, dear Denny, and when your name is mentioned, he rages and swears so that it is dreadful to hear him. What can make the gentlemen so angry with you?"

"So he actually was waiting with a horse-whip, was he? In that case I know what I would do. I would never go about without my pistol. I have hit one fellow," said I, "and if any other man threatens me I will defend myself."

My dear Agnes said that they were very kind to her at the Priory, although she could not bear Mr. Joseph—that they gave her good masters, that she was to go to a good school kept by a Catholic lady at Arundel. And oh, how she wished her Denny would turn Catholic, and she prayed for him always, always! And for that matter I know some one who never night or morning on his knees has forgotten that little maiden. The father used to come and give her lessons three or four times in the week, and she used to learn her lessons by heart, walking up and down

in the great green walk in the kitchen-garden every morning at eleven o'clock. I knew the kitchen-garden! the wall was in North Lane, one of the old walls of the convent: at the end of the green walk there was a pear-tree. And that was where she always went to learn her lessons.

And here, I suppose, Mrs. Barnard returned to the room, having found her spectacles. And as I take mine off my nose and shut my eyes, that well-remembered scene of boyhood passes before them—that garden basking in the autumn evening—that little maiden with peachy cheeks, and glistening curls, that dear and kind old lady, who says, “’Tis time now, children, you should go home.”

I had to go to school that night; but before I went I ran up North Lane and saw the old wall and the pear-tree behind it. And do you know I thought I would try and get up the wall, and easy enough it was to find a footing between those crumbling old stones; and when on the top I could look down from the branches of the tree into the garden below, and see the house at the farther end. So that was the broad walk where Agnes learned her lessons? Master Denis Duval pretty soon had that lesson by heart.

Yes: but one day in the Christmas holidays, when there was a bitter frost, and the stones and the wall were so slippery that Mr. D. D. tore his fingers and his small-clothes in climbing to his point of observation, it happened that little Agnes was *not* sitting under the tree learning her lessons, and none but an idiot would have supposed that she would have come out on such a day.

But who should be in the garden, pacing up and down the walk all white with hoar-frost, but Joseph Weston with his patch over his eye. Unluckily he had one eye left with which he saw me; and the next moment I heard the *report* of a tremendous oath, and then a brickbat came whizzing at my head, so close that, had it struck me, it would have knocked out my eye and my brains too.

I was down the wall in a moment: it was slippery enough: and two or three more brickbats came *à mon adresse*, but luckily failed to hit their mark.

A Gossip on Royal Christenings.

WHEN it is remembered that the first English Prince of Wales was created (at the age of seventeen) in the year 1301, it must be confessed that England was kept long waiting—no less than four hundred and sixteen years—before it saw, even through the then dim medium of the newspapers, a prince with that territorial title present at the christening of his own child. When this latter event did occur, it was not under happy or edifying auspices, for the solemn ceremony well-nigh ended in a fight between the princely sire and the ducal godfather.

That such a lapse of time should have occurred, that England should have had fourteen Princes of Wales—Plantagenet, York, Lancaster, Tudor, and Stuart—without seeing one of them carry a son to the font, till Brunswick had long been settled on the throne, is easily accounted for. Previous to the last-named era, only three Princes of Wales had married while they bore that title, namely, Edward the Black Prince, Edward son of Henry VI., and Arthur son of Henry VII. Neither of these married princes ascended the throne: they all died in the lifetime of their fathers. The Black Prince passed away exhausted by the burden of his glory; the later Edward fell, not murdered in the tent, but, as *Prévost* says, fairly fighting in the field, at Tewkesbury; and the pale and sickly Arthur withered away more ingloriously, under the effect of his cloistered life at Ludlow, with his wife "Catalina of the Golden Hair."

Of the marriages of those princes, one alone was not childless; nor were the christenings which followed it void of quaint grandeur. But the two children of Edward of Woodstock were born and baptized in France—the short-lived Edward at Angoulême, the less happy Richard at Bordeaux. Of the baptism of the latter alone are some few circumstances known. Before noticing these, and the occurrences which distinguished the baptismal ceremonies by which the children of other Princes of Wales were made members of the Church, we will glance at that of the first prince, the sad child of bright promise, who was *not* born in the Eagle Tower, at Caernarvon, as guides inform you. This solemnity was distinguished by the rare good-luck of the episcopal godfather.

Never was such a noble christening-fee given as that bestowed on Anian, Bishop of Bangor, for holding at the font, in some part of the unfinished Castle of Caernarvon, the young Edward, in whom begins the roll of our Princes of Wales. His father, on receiving the news of his birth, had, in his joy, made a knight of the messenger, stuffed his pouch with gold pieces, and bestowed on him a knightly house and ample acres. On the Bishop of Bangor, for his graceful performance of his duty at a

ceremony, the glory of which rendered celebrated the year 1284, the king heaped half-a-dozen estates, manors, and regalities. He threw in therewith a couple of ferries over the Menai, the tolls for conveyance of passengers going thenceforth into the episcopal, instead of into the royal, pocket. Such an example has never been followed, but the bishopric of Bangor long profited—perhaps still profits—by this christening gift, and grateful prelates thought pleasantly of the royal liberality, joyfully murmuring, as they counted rents and ferry tolls that came of the baptismal rite, “Eich Dyn !” *this was your man !*

Let us now look back at those few Princes of Wales who have gladdened the world with gay christenings of *their* children.

The marriage of the Black Prince with Joan, the Fair Maid of Kent, was a true love-match, made after some sprightly wooing ; albeit the lady was a widow, had been betrothed to a second lover, and was four years older than the gallant Edward. Both their children were born abroad—Edward, who died early, at Angoulême ; and Richard, who was christened in his native city of Bordeaux. The ceremony of his christening made the old city delirious with delight. To render due honour to the occasion, knights bruised one another in jousts, and battered each other in tournaments. There was a twanging of harps and a ringing of joyous choruses in the market-place and at street-corners. There was gay and frolicsome dancing by the glad young of both sexes, and there was a drinking of Gascony wine to an extent that might have won envy or admiration from Gargantua himself. Two of the young prince's godfathers were kings. Small kings they were, it is true. One was Charles, King of Navarre, the other, James, King of Minorca. The first kept the more joyous court ; the latter the more ceremonious ; for it was not lawful for the King of Minorca to be merry, except on great festivals, and surely this was one,—the christening of the son of the noble Prince of Wales. How this son came by his name of Richard once puzzled archæologists. He derived it from his third sponsor, Richard, Bishop of Agen, and good people were relieved of some of their perplexities by this audacious condescension on the part of the prelate. He would hardly (they thought) have given his own name to the little prince if he had felt any doubts touching that little prince's legitimacy.

It must be confessed that many orthodox persons looked with strong suspicion as to the legality of the marriage of Edward and Joan. There was a kinship between them, in the third degree ; there was a previous contract with another wooer, Lord Salisbury ; and, more fatal obstruction still, the Prince of Wales had himself stood godfather to a son of Joan by her first husband, Sir Thomas Holland. The contract was soon pronounced invalid, and the kinship was excused, but Rome was puzzled touching this sponsorship. A sponsor could not wed with the mother of his godchild ; but the Roman doctors found their way out of the difficulty, and the Pope issued a decree, legalizing the marriage, on the ground that at the baptism of Joan's child the princely father had not touched her

son, nor any of his clothes. "Non recordatur, quod ipse dictum filium vel aliquos ejus panniculos tetigerit!"

Many years elapsed before a Prince of Wales was again present at the christening of his own child. When George Augustus of Hanover was invested with that title, after the accession of his father as George the First, he was already the sire of four children, born in Germany—Frederick, Anne, Amelia, and Caroline. The first child born alive, after the Prince and Princess of Wales were established in this country, was the short-lived George William, at whose baptism some of the august company had nearly come to fisticuffs! The King had undertaken to stand sponsor, and he had consented to accept his brother, the Bishop of Osnaburgh, for his fellow gossip. But on that gloomy christening day of November, 1717, his Majesty appeared in the Princess's bedchamber, where the ceremony was to be performed, with the man whom, of all others, the Prince of Wales most cordially hated—the Duke of Newcastle—that Pelham, whom Foote has unpleasantly immortalized as Matthew Mug, in the "Mayor of Garratt."

This baptism was not only mean in the manner of it, but ignoble in the conduct of some who were present. It was properly said to have been done in "hugger mugger." While the officiating prelate read the prayers, at the foot of the bed, on which the Princess reclined, the Prince stood on one side, fuming with ill-suppressed rage. The King and Newcastle, whom his Majesty insisted upon having as a fellow-sponsor, stood on the opposite side, not ill-pleased to witness the vexation of which they were the cause. But when Wake had closed his book, and his chaplain had murmured *Amen*, the Prince of Wales stretched across the couch, thrust his fist towards Newcastle's face, saluted him with a hearty "You rascal!" and pelted him with menaces of hereafter "finding" or "fighting him." It cannot be disguised that in St. James's Palace there was emphatically a row of a very vulgar sort. And it terminated by the King turning son, daughter-in-law, and grandson, into the street, on that very wretched November afternoon. Where they were to go he neither knew nor cared. At all events they should not stay there! Here was a close to a christening festival! What was to be done? The Prince and Princess looked at their chamberlain, the Dutch Lord Granthan, the D'Overquerque who, at King William's death, had assumed the name of Nassau (in spite of the old King's prohibition), and thus had manifested his pride in being even illegitimately descended from Maurice of Nassau. The Prince and Princess looked at their chamberlain, and Lord Grantham invited them to his house, in Albemarle Street, where they lived in "private lodgings" for well nigh a whole twelvemonth.

The baby, thus unmannerly christened, soon after died. The Duke of Newcastle, by virtue of his office in the royal household, had to arrange the funeral in the abbey. Satirical persons, thereupon, observed that the duke had introduced the little prince, not only into the bosom, but also into the bowels of the Church!

The honest English folk would gladly have seen some counterfeit presentment of this first son of a Prince of Wales born in England. The shortness of his life prevented this, but Bakewell of Cornhill did, as he thought, the next best thing, by publishing a portrait of the wet-nurse! The good lady is seated, full front, with ample demonstration of her qualifications for her office. A poor closely-swathed baby lies in her extensive lap, careless, as it would seem, or unable to profit by the good things ostentatiously offered to him. But the gossips, even before the christening, augured ill of this little fellow, for no other reason than that his grandsire had created him Duke of Gloucester! It was a name of ill omen, they said. Was not Thomas of Gloucester smuggled to Calais, and butchered there? Was not Duke Humphrey murdered in prison? Richard of Gloucester was slain, they believed, at Bosworth; Duke Henry, son of Charles the First, died in his bright youth; and, barely seventeen years before, there had perished in his sad youth William Duke of Gloucester, the last of Queen Ann's seventeen children! Burnet had just been grinding this poor lad at a sort of encyclopædic education, crowned by the history of the Gothic constitution and of the beneficiary and feudal laws! The sickly prince died just after his eleventh birth-day anniversary. Burnet complacently thought that the pupil whom he had helped to christen and to kill, died of a surfeit of birth-day jollification! And because of all this the ducal title of *Gloucester* sounded ill in the ears of the gossips.

These ceremonies had, by this time, lost nearly all the splendour which used to attend their celebration. None of the children of Frederick Prince of Wales, son of George II., was christened with any outward form of state, to show that the nation was interested in the matter. The baptism of the youngest child of Frederick, named after his father, is open to remark only because the circumstance of his having been christened about three weeks after he was born, seems to have been considered a scandalous delay. The birth took place on May 30, 1750, the baptism on the 17th of the following month (old style). Chesterfield, writing to Dayrolles, on the 19th, observes: "The Prince of Wales's last child was, at last, christened the day before yesterday, after having been kept at least a fortnight longer than it should have been out of a state of salvation, by the jumble of the two Secretaries of State, whose reciprocal despatches carried, nor brought, nothing decisive."

George, the eldest son of Frederick, was baptized in the mansion in which he was born, Norfolk House, St. James's Square, and he was the last of our bachelor Princes of Wales. In the person of his granddaughter, however, we once more witness the baptism of a child of a Prince of Wales. It was celebrated on the 11th of February, 1796. The ceremony was private, and rather "shabby" than otherwise. For this, the princely father excused himself on the ground of his "*circumstances*." When the Princess Charlotte was barely three weeks old, her father had been compelled to reduce his establishment to the lowest point

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at which a prince could live with decency. At least, he said so, by way of apology for his not receiving the Corporation of London (whose members went up with a congratulatory address), with a little state and a large hospitality. On the day of the christening at Carlton House, there was only a family party assembled, to which the poor, frivolous mother of the princess performed the part of hostess for the last time in her life. A dinner preceded the ceremony, to which the King and Queen and their daughters drove, in private carriages, from Buckingham House, at various hours, in the course of the afternoon. It was a late dinner for George III., but an inconveniently early one for his son. The party sat down at half-past four, and must have enjoyed themselves in some degree according to the convivial fashion of the time, for it was not till near ten that the King called for the baby and the archbishop, both of whom, at that hour, would have been much better, for their health's sake, in bed.

Nevertheless, Moore, the Archbishop, and Loughborough, the Chancellor, with the latter of whom the prince was not on friendly terms, and several state officials, with a few guests, assembled in the Audience Chamber, where the little princess lay, in a gaily decorated cradle, half surrounded by attendants. She was taken up and held by Lady Townshend, held indeed so long that the poor lady, who was in very delicate health, could hardly sustain the precious load, light as was the freight.

The Princess of Wales, with some tenderness of feeling, respectfully asked the Queen if she would graciously permit Lady Townshend to be seated; but Queen Charlotte, who would not even allow her own daughters to sit, when *etiquette* demanded that they should be erect in her presence, only blew her snuff from the tips of her gloves, and answered—"No! no! She may stand; she may stand!"

If Lady Townshend had let fall the little princess, what a coil would have been made for what she could not prevent! But she loyally contrived to bear the royal infant to the end of a ceremony at which the King and the Duke of York were the godfathers, and the Queen, with the Duchess of Brunswick, by proxy, the illustrious but not too affectionate godmothers.

There followed what was called "a general distribution of refreshments" to wind up the day which had begun with a dinner. The earlier banquet was of two courses, with a desert which was marked "by elegance,—and frugality." The refreshing "distribution," at the close of the evening, had indications, it is said, of "distinct economy."

Having recorded thus much in illustration of the baptism of the children of the few Princes of Wales who have been fathers while they bore that title, let us now glance at that of the eldest sons of kings who received the territorial dignity at or about the period of their christening. In honour of the late happy celebration at Buckingham Palace, we have placed the heirs of the Princes of Wales before their sires. The christenings of the latter did not, invariably, pass over in as much harmony as grandeur. We have already adverted to the first celebration of the rite at Caer-

narvon. The Welsh looked on the royal child born there as their prince, from his birth. When he in turn became a father, the christening of his son by Isabel of France was not brought to a happy end without some dissension. The Queen's uncle Louis, Count of Evreux, was then a guest at the English court, and as intended godfather to the child, he suggested that the boy should bear the name he and the heir to the crown of France bore,—that of Louis. All the French ladies and nobles tarrying at court for the solemnity, thought the idea charming, and Isabel herself was disposed to adopt it. But the English king declared that the boy should have none but an English name, and when English folk heard of the monarch's declaration, they cried ay! to it with all their hearts. One result was, that the French count withdrew, in dudgeon. But the sovereign found a brace of bishops, a duke from Bretagne, and an English earl and knight, who accepted the office of gossips with alacrity, and the name of Edward, was given to the child, to the intense delight of all Englishmen, who pledged him in hogsheads of light wine, such as used to be given to thirsty folk disposed to get loyally drunk.

At the above christening, the joy was all the greater, as the distribution of wine to the people (the government had generous ideas for the benefit of the folk in those days) was on an unusually liberal scale. At that of the Black Prince, the chief charm was in the picture of the beautiful infant and his incomparable mother. As Philippa sat with him on her lap, the group was so inexpressibly affecting, that the idea of the Madonna and Child was in the mind of all who were present; and it was not forgotten by contemporary and later artists. At the baptism of Edward, son of Henry VI., in 1453, the royal Margaret saw her doomed child carried to the font by a lady in waiting. The time was one of the utmost distress, and men marvelled at the extravagant splendour of the prince's mantle, which cost 544*l.* 16*s.* 8*d.*, "hundreds" which would barely now be represented by "thousands." But it probably only cost this sum to the poor vendor, for King and Queen were not in circumstances to pay for it, and their inability only became greater as years advanced. Brilliant as the scene was, there was a cloud above the horizon which overshadowed it with gloom. The nobles dazzled the eyes of the spectators by the bravery of their apparel; but, within a few years, half of them were slain in the wars of the Roses, or slaughtered at the block by their triumphant captors.

The baptismal rite of the prince who was, subsequently, for a few dreary weeks, Edward V., was under the shadow of a greater gloom than that which rested on his young predecessor's. The son of Edward IV. was born when his mother was in sanctuary, at Westminster, and if the consequent rites were not maimed, they at least were shorn of all splendid unrealities. The provident monks generously contributed some wax tapers. The prior and the abbot consented to stand as godfathers, Lady Scrope, the fugitive Queen's woman being their gossip, and Mother Cobb, an honest woman, who had made the sanctuary rooms as com-

fortable as circumstances would permit, was, for all practical purposes, as useful as the proudest duchess of them all, in carrying young Edward to the font. But there was haste with scant solemnity, in this affair; as the old annotator of an old chronicler quaintly remarks, "the whole ceremony of the christening was as mean as a poor man's child."

What the order was of that which made a Christian of Edward of Middleham, before his father, the Duke of Gloster, had ascended the throne, as Richard the Third, no record sayeth. Richard was then in his twenty-second, his wife in her nineteenth year. They kept more joyous house than Lancastrian writers care to avow; and Louis XI. rendered it none the less joyous by sending wine of "*La Haute France*" to its princely owners. The tenderness of Richard's love for this boy was manifested in the frenzy of his despair when he had lost him. If any oral legends of the christening are extant, it must be in Wensley Dale, where Richard was affectionately regarded, as indeed he was throughout the North; where the poor yet profit by some of his charities, and where, in the words of Bacon, "the memory of King Richard was so strong that it lay, like lees in the bottom of men's hearts, and if the vessel was but stirred, it would come up."

While we know little concerning the baptism of Edward of Middleham, we may, in the mind's eye, see all that passed at that of the next Prince of Wales, Arthur of Winchester, son of Henry VII. We may readily imagine all that gold, and crimson velvet, and flaunting plumes, and flashing jewellery, and irrepressible joyousness effected on that occasion, for there is record of the same which dazzles in manner and matter, and wearies and perplexes by its length. Amid the shifting and restlessly gorgeous spectacle, we see that new silver gilt font, hallowed only yesterday by Bishop Alcock, made expressly for the occasion. *There*, comes sedately the Queen, her sedate sister Anne, with a "rich chrysom pinned at her breast," and her not less grave sister Cicely carrying the child in her arms. The King has not much love for these ladies, his "poor relations," and still less for one of the two noblemen who escort Cicely and the baby. That one (the Earl of Dorset is the other), is John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln, whose mother, Elizabeth, was a sister of Richard III. Henry hated him because of that drop of Plantagenet blood, in virtue of which Richard had thought of his nephew John as his successor. But let Earl John pass on; next year, he will be lying stark and bloody, on the field of Stoke. Meanwhile, the procession moves along. The King and Queen are spectators rather than actors. There is a settling and unsettling of groups, and a carrying in and out of the infant prince, and an anxious looking towards the chief gate of Winchester Cathedral, for the coming of the most noble godfather, the Earl of Oxford. Hour after hour passes away, and still he cometh not; but the proud De Vere has to ride from Suffolk, and the roads, or the gigantic ruts which pass for them, are almost impassable, from the recent heavy rains. The priests begin to look vexed, but Oxford is not the man to

hurry himself because of *them*. He it was who successfully argued that point, in parliament, whereby he established the precedency of the temporal over the spiritual barons. Yet he might prick his steed a little, were it only out of homage to his sovereign, and love for the ladies. Six hours, sovereign and ladies and officials had waited for him, when the wearied King nominated the Earl of Derby as Oxford's substitute, and commanded that the ceremony should be no longer delayed. The little prince had just received that British name of Arthur, the very sound of which, it was thought, would strike terror into the hearts of all foreign nations, and he had just been immersed bodily in the deep water of the capacious font, and *Te Deum* was on the point of being shouted, not only in the cathedral, but in every church in Winchester,—the bells were already "firing" in joyous thunderings of clamour—when the tardy Oxford, booted and spurred, was seen coming up the centre aisle. He was in time, at all events, to see his godchild properly cared for, after his immersion, and to place him on the high altar, where he lay during the celebration of the evening service. No point of form was omitted which could add lustre to a ceremony which proved to be the last according to the Roman Catholic ritual, by which a Prince of Wales was made regenerate. And the conclusion was worthy of the occasion, for then, the chief personages assembled around the shrine of St. Swithin, where they ate "spices," and drank hippocras to the health of Prince Arthur, under the shadow of the thirstiest of saints.

Whether Prince Arthur was, or was not, the last little gentleman of his rank who was baptized by immersion, we are unable to say, but we may state, on the authority of Sir John Floyer, the physician, that baptism by immersion continued in general use till the year 1600; and its disuse is, with him, a matter of much regret. He looks on the sanitary, not on the theological side of the question, whether princes or people be concerned. "The English," he says, "will at last return to it, when physic has given them a clear proof, by divers experiments, that cold baths are both safe and useful. They did great injury to their children and all posterity who first introduced the alteration of this truly ancient ceremony of immersion, and were the occasion of a degenerate, sickly, tender race ever since. Instead of prejudicing the health of their children, immersion would prevent many hereditary diseases, if it were still practised,"—and princes and people are now of the same opinion as Sir John Floyer, but they give it more practical application than even he thought of.

Nothing is said of immersion at the christening of Arthur's brother, Henry; and there was nothing remarkable at that (in Scotland) of the two sons of James I., who were successively Princes of Wales, except that the King behaved with no more decorum than was expected of him.

There are two circumstances which render the christening of Charles Stuart, afterwards Charles II., interesting. One is, that it was the last celebration of the rite with anything like the old-fashioned gorgeous accompaniments. The other is that one of the proxies for godmother

was the ex-wife of a city vintner! On the 27th of June, 1730, the day being Sunday, the Chapel Royal was crowded by a brilliant assembly, especially of peeresses, whose looks and tire out-flourished the month itself. Some of the gayer of these prophesied more truly than Dame Eleanor Davies of the lately-born prince, for they augured that as the planet Venus had blazed out, at full noon, on the day of his birth, he would necessarily become a gallant cavalier among maids and matrons. The peers, all on the opposite side of the chapel, who had nothing original of their own to advance, may have borrowed Mr. Fuller's remark on the appearance of the star, the silvery splendour of which had saluted the entrance of Charles, as Lord Foppington might say, "into human nature,"—namely, that "Heaven had opened one eye more than usual on the occasion," and that the royal Christian would, of course, be well looked after. Speculation, however, soon yielded to what was passing before them. Four royal chaplains, with the gentlemen of the King's Chapel, and some less-dignified officials, were seen issuing, ail in surplices and copes, from the entrance of the chapel. There was a whisper—"They are going to fetch the baby!" They had scarcely knocked at the nursery door than it was opened, and buxom Mrs. Wyndham, with a blooming Welsh wet-nurse at her side, appeared on the threshold, with the future Charles II. in her arms, as fat as young Bacchus, and as swart as a raven. Old Archbishop Abbot, who had run a race of servility and adulation with Whitgift, as some persons believe, received this interesting company as they came within sight of the chapel door. Then the heralds and masters of ceremonies had some trouble in exercising their vocation, till, at length, every person was in his proper place, and evening prayer was read and the anthem was sung. Then the child-prince was carried to the font, his train held by two countesses, and he and Mrs. Wyndham flanked by two great lords. All things having been brought to this point, a gentleman-usher passed from the King's pew with his Majesty's orders to the sponsors as to the name to be given to his son. Trumpets and organ, blasts from the one, billows of sound from the other, attended on this ceremony. And then, the solemnity was carried through, according to the rubric, and evening prayer came to an end, with a command from the King that "the Thanksgiving should be sung as set by Craufurd,"—a composer patronized by royalty, but unknown to fame. Lastly, the sponsors having renounced, on behalf of the infant, all the pomp and vanities of this wicked world, that tremendous personage, Garter-King-of-Arms, under a very hurricane of "blazon" from the silver trumpets of the attendants on such "kings," proclaimed such a roll of titles appertaining to his princely highness in long clothes, as to prove that pomps and vanities went for something in this best of all possible worlds, after all.

Not yet, however, was the ceremony brought to a close. At a burst from the organ, the prince was carried up to the altar, where he put, or had put for him, in the hands of the dean, his "offering." The sponsors

and proxies did likewise, and indeed there was a general paying of very heavy "forfeits," for the honour of officiating, or of being present at this last of right-royally celebrated christenings.

Next to the baby, on that day, the most important personage was his mother; but Henrietta Maria would not attend a Protestant service, though there was little in it that differed from that of her own church. We have spoken of sponsors and proxies, but only the latter were present. The Marquis of Hamilton was the representative of Frederick, the "Winter King of Bohemia." Subsequently, the latter lost his crown, the former his head. The other proxies represented Roman Catholic principals,—the Duke of Lennox for Louis XIII. of France; the dowager Duchess of Richmond stood for that king's mother, Marie de Medicis.

Perhaps, of all the persons present on this christening-day, there was none so remarkable as this dowager-duchess. She was the widow of three husbands, the first of whom was a city vintner named Prannell. She was in her youth the fairest of the daughters of Lord Howard of Bindon, Frances by name. But "pretty Fanny's way" led her to wed with the vintner. Subsequently when, a dazzling young widow, she married the Earl of Hertford, a despairing lover, Sir George Rodney, ran himself through with his sword, and left her a farewell sonnet written in his blood. When a widow for the second time, she took for her third husband the noble Ludovic Stuart, Duke of Richmond, who had long been more than half-mad for this wonderful creature. And now, at the time of this christening, she was nearly fifty years of age, and had not passed through much more than half her earthly pilgrimage. As she was borne through the streets in her "caroche and six," people admired the group of knights who rode with her; but they probably did not believe what was reported—that she gave to each 50*l.* for a guerdon, or that she bestowed the same sum on the royal coachman who had charge of her, or 10*l.* on each of the running footmen, who preceded the vehicle. When the gifts to the royal baby were carried from the vestry, the spectators talked of the gorgeous jewel, worth 7,000*l.* which the duchess had offered to the child. Mrs. Walton, the Welsh wet-nurse, wore a gold chain, valued at 200*l.* of the duchess's giving. She had sent services of massive plate to the "wise-woman," and Mrs. Wyndham; and cups, salt-cellars, and dozens of spoons, solid silver all, were generously sent by her to the cradle-rockers. So said public report; but Queen Marie de Medicis herself, who was as poor as the duchess, could not have paid for things which only existed in the imagination of the people, based on the easy assertions of the dowager. This triple widow, who had even "set her cap" at King James in his widowhood, was of a most prolific imagination. When she stood godmother to one of the Queen of Bohemia's children, the lady announced that she had forwarded a magnificent service of gold plate to the princess; and the inventory was circulated at every party between Wallingford House and Fenchurch Street; but the splendid liberality was but a vision—one which flattered the half-crazed pride of a singular woman. When such pride

sometimes troubled the ordinary equanimity of her second husband, he used to gently tap her on the shoulder, and cry, "Frank, Frank ! how long is it since you married the vintner ?" Such was the maddest proxy that ever did duty at a royal baptism.

If we except the private christening and "gazetting" of the son of James the Second, in 1688, on which occasion it is uncertain whether the then so-called Prince of Wales was named by the papal nuncio "James Francis Edward," or "Innocent Leon Francis James"—nor is the matter of much importance,—with the exception indicated, a Prince of Wales was not again christened in England till the year 1762, when George Augustus Frederick, afterwards George the Fourth, was baptized at St. James's, by Archbishop Secker. Walpole remarked that his birth did not improve the prospects of the Pretender, while orthodox people shook their heads at Archbishop Secker, who had not only baptized, confirmed, crowned, and married George the Third, but had survived to christen the first son of that monarch. These good folk shook their head, not because they doubted the learning or piety of Secker, but because they doubted the validity of the ordinance as administered by him, for Secker was born and bred a Dissenter, and had never been baptized after the form ordained by the Episcopal Church. They thought the necessary virtue was not in him, and that consequently the third George and his son were as good, or as bad, as not baptized at all. The ceremony was not, at all events, a gorgeous one, but it was marked by an old custom which has ceased to be observed. In the drawing-room at St. James's, where the rite was celebrated, access to which was given to such of the nobility as happened to know that the privilege was general, a tasteful and magnificent bed was erected, on which Queen Charlotte lay, or sat, in state while the ceremony proceeded. The infant's grandmother, and the Dukes of Cumberland and Mecklenburgh were the sponsors, and as soon as the private form of administration had been gone through, the respective persons withdrew. Compared with the christenings of the Black Prince, Prince Arthur, or Charles Stuart, this was but a mean and sorry affair. But the nation was not discontented. If there was not much grandeur within, whereby trade might profit, and no *largesse* without, wherewith thirsty folk might slake and create thirst in honour of the prince, there was an heir of whom the poets and other soothsayers declared that he would be the father of a line of kings—but the prophets were very much mistaken in their vaticinations.

Looking back on the baptisms of our princesses, none so well illustrates the ancient glory of the solemn rite as that of the Princess (afterwards Queen) Elizabeth, who was the last little royal lady who was christened in the old-fashioned state, and with the old-fashioned ceremonies. Seymour, Lord Hertford, carried the baby in his arms; Bourchier, Lord Essex, stood by with the gold basons; Courtenay, Marquis of Exeter, had charge of the wax; Dorset had no heavier burden than the salt; Lord Hussey walked in the train, with the graceful rhymer Lord Rochford; and

Cranmer, one of the godfathers, was near the royal mother of the well-attended infant. Nothing could well seem more gay and gorgeous, more real in present enjoyment, more full of future promise. But the gloomy future marred the fair precedent. Every one of the above-named persons, save the baby herself, came to violent deaths. All the men, except one, perished on the scaffold. The one excepted was the godfather, who died at the stake. The mother suffered as her great officers did, tasting of the axe and the sawdust; and some others of the glittering company, though they tasted not of such grief themselves, endured the next degree of bitterness, through their relatives. There was, for instance, the Earl of Derby, who would not, perhaps, have been so expansive in his mirth, had he been aware that his daughter's husband, Lord Stourton, would come to be hanged, and would well-merit his destiny.

Perhaps the most startling circumstance in reference to the Christianizing of a young prince, was the making him a bishop *before* he was made a Christian! When the second son of George III. was born, he who was subsequently Duke of York, the bishopric of Osnaburgh happened to be vacant. The nomination was alternately in a Roman Catholic and a Protestant German state,—the latter being Hanover. George III., as elector, and influenced by Queen Charlotte, named his newly-born son; after which, the boy-bishop was carried up to be christened! There were, of course, no duties, but there was 2,000*l.* a year, till his Royal Reverence was eighteen, and 25,000*l.* annually, which he enjoyed for the remainder of his life!

The last-named sovereigns brought no such good fortune to the children of the aristocracy, to whom they condescended to become sponsors. To one child their presence was fatal. In 1778, they "stood" to the infant daughter of the last Duke and Duchess of Chandos. Cornwallis, Archbishop of Canterbury (the Sunday drums of whose wife, at Lambeth Palace, scandalized the "religious world"), officiated. The baby overwhelmed by whole mountains of lace, lay in a dead faint. Her mother was so tender on the point of etiquette, that she would not let the little incident trouble a ceremony at which a king and queen were about to endow her child with the names of Georgina Charlotte! As Cornwallis gave back the infant to her nurse, he remarked that it was the quietest baby he had ever held. Poor victim of ceremony! It was not quite dead, but dying; in a few unconscious hours, it calmly slept away into an immortal waking.

Pagan and Christian Religious Sentiment.

I READ the other day in the *Dublin Review*:—"We Catholics are apt to be cowed and scared by the lordly oppression of public opinion, and not to bear ourselves as men in the face of the anti-Catholic society of England. It is good to have an habitual consciousness that the public opinion of Catholic Europe looks upon Protestant England with a mixture of impatience and compassion, which more than balances the arrogance of the English people towards the Catholic Church in these countries."

The Holy Catholic Church, Apostolic and Roman, can take very good care of herself, and I am not going to defend her against the scorns of Exeter Hall. Catholicism is not a great visible force in this country, and the mass of mankind will always treat lightly even things the most venerable, if they do not present themselves as visible forces before its eyes. In Catholic countries, as the *Dublin Review* itself says with triumph, they make very little account of the greatness of Exeter Hall. The majority has eyes only for the things of the majority, and in England the immense majority is Protestant. And yet, in spite of all the shocks which the feeling of a good Catholic, like the writer in the *Dublin Review*, has in this Protestant country inevitably to undergo, in spite of the contemptuous insensibility to the grandeur of Rome which he finds so general and so hard to bear, how much has he to console him, how many acts of homage to the greatness of his religion may he see if he has his eyes open! I will tell him of one of them. Let him go in London to that delightful spot, that Happy Island in Bloomsbury, the reading-room of the British Museum. Let him visit its sacred quarter, the region where its theological books are placed. I am almost afraid to say what he will find there, for fear Mr. Spurgeon, like a second Caliph Omar, should give the library to the flames. He will find an immense Catholic work, the collection of the Abbé Migne, lording it over that whole region, reducing to insignificance the feeble Protestant forces which hang upon its skirts. Protestantism is duly represented; indeed, Mr. Panizzi knows his business too well to suffer it to be otherwise; all the varieties of Protestantism are there; there is the Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology, learned, decorous, exemplary, but a little uninteresting; there are the works of Calvin, rigid, militant, menacing; there are the works of Dr. Chalmers, the Scotch thistle valiantly doing duty as the rose of Sharon, but keeping something very Scotch about it all the time; there are the works of Dr. Channing, the last word of religious philosophy in a land where every one has some culture and where superiorities are discountenanced,—the flower of moral and intelligent mediocrity. But

how are all these divided against one another, and how, though they were all united, are they dwarfed by the Catholic Leviathan, their neighbour ! Majestic in its blue and gold unity, this fills shelf after shelf and compartment after compartment, its right mounting up into heaven among the white folios of the *Acta Sanctorum*, its left plunging down into hell among the yellow octavos of the *Law Digest*. Everything is there, in that immense *Patrologiæ Cursus Completus*, in that *Encyclopédie Théologique*, that *Nouvelle Encyclopédie Théologique*, that *Troisième Encyclopédie Théologique*; religion, philosophy, history, biography, arts, sciences, bibliography, gossip. The work embraces the whole range of human interests; like one of the great Middle-Age Cathedrals, it is in itself a study for a life. Like the net in Scripture, it drags everything to land, bad and good, lay and ecclesiastical, sacred and profane, so that it be but matter of human concern. Wide-embracing as the power whose product it is ! a power, for history, at any rate, eminently *the Church*; not, I think, the Church of the future, but indisputably the Church of the past, and, in the past, the Church of the multitude.

This is why the man of imagination, nay, and the philosopher too, in spite of her propensity to burn him, will always have a weakness for the Catholic Church; because of the rich treasures of human life which have been stored within her pale. The mention of other religious bodies, or of their leaders, at once calls up in our mind the thought of men of a definite type as their adherents; the mention of Catholicism suggests no such special following. Anglicanism suggests the English episcopate; Calvin's name suggests Dr. Candlish, Chalmers's, the Duke of Argyll, Channing's, Boston society; but Catholicism suggests—what shall I say?—all the pell-mell of the men and women of Shakespeare's plays. This abundance the Abbé Migne's collection faithfully reflects. People talk of this or that work which they would choose, if they were to pass their life with only one; for my part I think I would choose the Abbé Migne's collection. *Quicquid agunt homines*,—everything, as I have said, is there. Do not seek in it splendour of form, perfection of editing; its paper is common, its type ugly, its editing indifferent, its printing careless. The greatest and most baffling crowd of misprints I ever met with in my life occurs in a very important page of the introduction to the *Dictionnaire des Apocryphes*. But this is just what you have in the world,—quantity rather than quality. Do not seek in it impartiality, the critical spirit; in reading it you must do the criticism for yourself; it loves criticism as little as the world loves it. Like the world, it chooses to have things all its own way, to abuse its adversary, to back its own notion through thick and thin, to put forward all the *pros* for its own notion, to suppress all the *contras*; it does just all that the world does, and all that the critical spirit shrinks from. Open the *Dictionnaire des Erreurs Sociales*: "The religious persecutions of Henry the Eighth's and Edward the Sixth's time abated a little in the reign of Mary, to break out again with new fury in the reign of Elizabeth." There is a summary of the history of religious persecution under the

Tudors ! But how unreasonable to reproach the Abbé Migne's work with wanting a criticism, which, by the very nature of things, it cannot have, and not rather to be grateful to it for its abundance, its variety, its infinite suggestiveness, its happy adoption, in many a delicate circumstance, of the urbane tone and temper of the man of the world, instead of the acrid tone and temper of the fanatic !

Still, in spite of their fascinations, the contents of this collection sometimes rouse the critical spirit within one. It happened that lately, after I had been thinking much of Marcus Aurelius and his times, I took down the *Dictionnaire des Origines du Christianisme*, to see what it had to say about paganism and pagans. I found much what I expected. I read the article, *Révélation Évangélique, sa Nécessité*. There I found what a sink of iniquity was the whole pagan world ; how one Roman fed his oysters on his slaves, how another put a slave to death that a curious friend might see what dying was like ; how Galen's mother tore and bit her waiting-women when she was in a passion with them. I found this account of the religion of paganism : " Paganism invented a mob of divinities with the most hateful character, and attributed to them the most monstrous and abominable crimes. It personified in them drunkenness, incest, kidnapping, adultery, sensuality, knavery, cruelty, and rage." And I found that from this religion there followed such practice as was to be expected ; " What must naturally have been the state of morals under the influence of such a religion, which penetrated with its own spirit the public life, the family life, and the individual life of antiquity ? "

The colours in this picture are laid on very thick, and I for my part cannot believe that any human societies, with a religion and practice such as those just described, could ever have endured as the societies of Greece and Rome endured, still less have done what the societies of Greece and Rome did. We are not brought far by descriptions of the vices of great cities, or even of individuals driven mad by unbounded means of self-indulgence. Feudal and aristocratic life in Christendom has produced horrors of selfishness and cruelty not surpassed by the noble of pagan Rome ; and then, again, in antiquity there is Marcus Aurelius's mother to set against Galen's. Eminent examples of vice and virtue in individuals prove little as to the state of societies. What, under the first emperors, was the condition of the Roman poor upon the Aventine compared with that of our poor in Spitalfields and Bethnal Green ? What, in comfort, morals, and happiness, were the rural population of the Sabine country under Augustus's rule, compared with the rural population of Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire under the rule of Queen Victoria ?

But these great questions are not for me. Without trying to answer them, I ask myself, when I read such declamation as the foregoing, if I can find anything that will give me a near, distinct sense of the real difference in spirit and sentiment between paganism and Christianity, and of the natural effect of this difference upon people in general. I

take a representative religious poem of paganism,—of the paganism which all the world has in its mind when it speaks of paganism. To be a representative poem, it must be one for popular use, one that the multitude listens to. Such a religious poem may be found at the end of one of the best and happiest of Theocritus's idylls, the fifteenth. In order that the reader may the better go along with me in the line of thought I am following, I will translate it; and, that he may see the medium in which religious poetry of this sort is found existing, the society out of which it grows, the people who form it and are formed by it, I will translate the whole, or nearly the whole, of the idyll (it is not long) in which the poem occurs.

The idyll is dramatic. Somewhere about two hundred and eighty years before the Christian era, a couple of Syracusan women, staying at Alexandria, agreed on the occasion of a great religious solemnity, the feast of Adonis, to go together to the palace of King Ptolemy Philadelphus, to see the image of Adonis, which the queen, Arsinoe, Ptolemy's wife, had had decorated with peculiar magnificence. A hymn, by a celebrated performer, was to be recited over the image. The names of the two women are Gorgo and Praxinoe; their maids, who are mentioned in the poem, are called Eunoe and Eutychie. Gorgo comes by appointment to Praxinoe's house to fetch her, and there the dialogue begins:—

Gorgo.—Is Praxinoe at home?

Praxinoe.—My dear Gorgo, at last! Yes, here I am. Eunoe, find a chair—get a cushion for it.

Gorgo.—It will do beautifully as it is.

Praxinoe.—Do sit down.

Gorgo.—Oh, this gad-about spirit! I could hardly get to you, Praxinoe, through all the crowd and all the carriages. Nothing but heavy boots, nothing but men in uniform. And what a journey it is! My dear child, you really live *too* far off.

Praxinoe.—It is all that insane husband of mine. He has chosen to come out here to the end of the world, and take a hole of a place—for a house it is not—on purpose that you and I might not be neighbours. He is always just the same—anything to quarrel with one! anything for spite!

Gorgo.—My dear, don't talk so of your husband before the little fellow. Just see how astonished he looks at you. Never mind, Zopyrio, my pet, she is not talking about papa.

Praxinoe.—Good heavens! the child does really understand!

Gorgo.—Pretty papa!

Praxinoe.—That pretty papa of his the other day (though I told him beforehand to mind what he was about), when I sent him to a shop to buy soap and rouge, brought me home salt instead—stupid, great, big, interminable animal!

Gorgo.—Mine is just the fellow to him. . . . But never mind now,

get on your things and let us be off to the palace to see the Adonis. I hear the queen's decorations are something splendid.

Praxinoe.—In grand people's houses everything is grand. What things you have seen in Alexandria! What a deal you will have to tell to anybody who has never been here!

Gorgo.—Come, we ought to be going.

Praxinoe.—Every day is holiday to people who have nothing to do. Eunoe, pick up your work; and take care, lazy girl, how you leave it lying about again; the cats find it just the bed they like. Come, stir yourself, fetch me some water, quick. I wanted the water first, and the girl brings me the soap. Never mind; give it me. Not all that, extravagant! Now pour out the water—stupid! why don't you take care of my dress? That will do. I have got my hands washed as it pleased God. Where is the key of the large wardrobe? Bring it here—quick.

Gorgo.—Praxinoe, you can't think how well that dress, made full, as you've got it, suits you. Tell me, how much did it cost—the dress by itself, I mean?

Praxinoe.—Don't talk of it, Gorgo: more than eight guineas of good hard money. And about the work on it I have almost worn my life out.

Gorgo.—Well, you couldn't have done better.

Praxinoe.—Thank you. Bring me my shawl, and put my hat properly on my head—properly. No, child (*to her little boy*), I am not going to take you; there's a bogy on horseback, who bites. Cry, as much as you like. I'm not going to have you lamed for life. Now we'll start. Nurse, take the little one and amuse him; call the dog in, and shut the street-door. (*They go out.*) Good heavens! what a crowd of people! How on earth are we ever to get through all this? They are like ants: you can't count them. My dearest Gorgo, what will become of us? here are the royal Horse Guards. My good man, don't ride over me! Look at that bay horse rearing bolt upright; what a vicious one! Eunoe, you mad girl, do take care—that horse will certainly be the death of the man on his back. How glad I am now, that I left the child safe at home!

Gorgo.—All right, Praxinoe, we are safe behind them; and they have gone on to where they are stationed.

Praxinoe.—Well, yes, I begin to revive again. From the time I was a little girl I have had more horror of horses and snakes than of anything in the world. Let us get on; here's a great crowd coming this way upon us.

Gorgo (to an old woman).—Mother, are you from the palace?

Old Woman.—Yes, my dears.

Gorgo.—Has one a tolerable chance of getting there?

Old Woman.—My pretty young lady, the Greeks got to Troy by dint of trying hard; trying will do anything in this world.

Gorgo.—The old creature has delivered herself of an oracle and departed.

Praxinoe.—Women can tell you everything about everything, Jupiter's marriage with Juno not excepted.

Gorgo.—Look, *Praxinoe*, what a squeeze at the palace gates!

Praxinoe.—Tremendous! Take hold of me, *Gorgo*; and you, *Eunoe*, take hold of *Eutychis*—tight hold, or you'll be lost. Here we go in all together. Hold tight to us, *Eunoe*. Oh, dear! oh, dear! *Gorgo*, there's my scarf torn right in two. For heaven's sake, my good man, as you hope to be saved, take care of my dress!

Stranger.—I'll do what I can, but it doesn't depend upon me.

Praxinoe.—What heaps of people! They push like a drove of pigs.

Stranger.—Don't be frightened, ma'am, we are all right.

Praxinoe.—May you be all right, my dear sir, to the last day you live, for the care you have taken of us. What a kind, considerate man! There is *Eunoe* jammed in a squeeze. Push, you goose, push. Capital! We are all of us the right side of the door, as the bridegroom said when he had locked himself in with the bride.

Gorgo.—*Praxinoe*, come this way. Do but look at that work, how delicate it is—how exquisite! Why, they might wear it in heaven.

Praxinoe.—Heavenly patroness of needlewomen, what hands were hired to do that work? Who designed those beautiful patterns? They seem to stand up and move about, as if they were real—as if they were living things, and not needlework. Well, man is a wonderful creature! And look, look, how charming he lies there on his silver couch, with just a soft down on his cheeks, that beloved *Adonis*—*Adonis*, whom one loves, even though he is dead!

Another Stranger.—You wretched women, do stop your incessant chatter! Like turtles, you go on for ever. They are enough to kill one with their broad lingo—nothing but *ā, ā, ā*.

Gorgo.—Lord, where does the man come from? What is it to you if we are chatterboxes? Order about your own servants. Do you give orders to *Syracusan* women? If you want to know, we came originally from *Corinth*, as *Bellerophon* did; we speak *Peloponnesian*. I suppose *Dorian* women may be allowed to have a *Dorian* accent.

Praxinoe.—Oh, honey-sweet *Proserpine*, let us have no more masters than the one we've got! We don't the least care for you; pray don't trouble yourself for nothing.

Gorgo.—Be quiet, *Praxinoe*! That first-rate singer, the *Argive* woman's daughter, is going to sing the *Adonis* hymn. She is the same who was chosen to sing the dirge last year. We are sure to have something first-rate from her. She is going through her airs and graces ready to begin.

So far the dialogue; and, as it stands in the original, it can hardly be praised too highly. It is a page torn fresh out of the book of human life. What freedom! What animation! What gaiety! What naturalness! It is said that *Theocritus*, in composing this poem, borrowed from a work of *Sophron*, a poet of an earlier and better time; but, even if this is so, the form is still *Theocritus's* own, and how excellent is

that form, how masterly ! And this in a Greek poem of the decadence ; for Theocritus's poetry, after all, is poetry of the decadence. When such is Greek poetry of the decadence, what must be Greek poetry of the prime ?

Then the singer begins her hymn :—

" Mistress, who lovest the haunts of Golgi, and Idalium, and high-peaked Eryx, Aphrodite that playest with gold ! how have the delicate-footed Hours, after twelve months, brought thy Adonis back to thee from the ever-flowing Acheron ! Tardiest of the immortals are the boon Hours, but all mankind wait their approach with longing, for they ever bring something with them. O Cypris, Dione's child ! thou didst change—so is the story among men—Berenice from mortal to immortal, by dropping ambrosia into her fair bosom ; and in gratitude to thee for this, O thou of many names and many temples ! Berenice's daughter, Arsinoe, lovely Helen's living counterpart, makes much of Adonis, with all manner of braveries.

" All fruits that the tree bears are laid before him, all treasures of the garden in silver baskets, and alabaster boxes, gold-inlaid, of Syrian spikenard ; and all confectionery that cunning women make on their kneading-tray, kneading up every sort of flowers with white meal, and all that they make of sweet honey and of delicate oil, and all winged and creeping things are here set before him. And there are built for him green bowers with wealth of tender anise, and little boy-loves flutter about over them, like young nightingales trying their new wings on the tree, from bough to bough. Oh, the ebony, the gold, the eagle of white ivory that bears aloft his cup-bearer to Kronos-born Zeus ! And up there, see, a second couch strewn for lovely Adonis, scarlet coverlets softer than sleep itself (so Miletus and the Samian wool-grower will say) ; Cypris has hers, and the rosy-armed Adonis has his, that eighteen or nineteen-year-old bridegroom. His kisses will not wound, the hair on his lip is yet light.

" Now, Cypris, good-night, we leave thee with thy bridegroom ; but to-morrow morning, with the earliest dew, we will one and all bear him forth to where the waves plash upon the sea-strand, and letting loose our locks, and letting fall our robes, with bosoms bare, we will set up this, our melodious strain :

" ' Beloved Adonis, alone of the demigods (so men say) thou art permitted to visit both us and Acheron. This lot had neither Agamemnon, nor the mighty moon-struck hero Ajax, nor Hector the first-born of Hecuba's twenty children, nor Patroclus, nor Pyrrhus who came home from Troy, nor those yet earlier Lapithæ and the sons of Deucalion, nor the Pelasgians, the root of Argos and of Pelops' isle. Be gracious to us now, loved Adonis, and be favourable to us for the year to come ! Dear to us hast thou been at this coming, dear to us shalt thou be when thou comest again.' "

The poem concludes with a characteristic speech from Gorgo :—

" Praxinoe, certainly women are wonderful things. That lucky woman to know all that ! and luckier still to have such a splendid voice ! And

now we must see about getting home. My husband has not had his dinner. That man is all vinegar, and nothing else, and if you keep him waiting for his dinner, he's dangerous to go near. Adieu, precious Adonis, and may you find us all well when you come next year ! "

So, with the hymn still in her ears, says the incorrigible Gorgo.

But what a hymn that is ! Of religious emotion, in our acceptation of the words, and of the comfort springing from religious emotion, not a particle. And yet many elements of religious emotion are contained in the beautiful story of Adonis. Symbolically treated, as the thoughtful man might treat it, as the Greek mysteries undoubtedly treated it, this story was capable of a noble and touching application, and could lead the soul to elevating and consoling thoughts. Adonis was the sun in his summer and in his winter course, in his time of triumph and his time of defeat; but in his time of triumph still moving towards his defeat, in his time of defeat still returning towards his triumph. Thus he became an emblem of the power of life and the bloom of beauty, the power of human life and the bloom of human beauty, hastening inevitably to diminution and decay, yet in that very decay finding

Hope, and a renovation without end.

But nothing of this appears in the story as prepared for popular religious use, as presented to the multitude in a popular religious ceremony. Its treatment is not devoid of a certain grace and beauty, but it has nothing whatever that is elevating, nothing that is consoling, nothing that is in our sense of the word religious. The religious ceremonies of Christendom, even on occasion of the most joyful and mundane matters, present the multitude with strains of profoundly religious character, such as the *Kyrie eleison* and the *Te Deum*. But this Greek hymn to Adonis adapts itself exactly to the tone and temper of a gay and pleasure-loving multitude—of light-hearted people, like Gorgo and Praxinoë, whose moral nature is much of the same calibre as that of Phillina in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*, people who seem never made to be serious, never made to be sick or sorry. And, if they happen to be sick or sorry, what will they do then ? But that we have no right to ask. Phillina, within the enchanted bounds of Goethe's novel, Gorgo and Praxinoë, within the enchanted bounds of Theocritus's poem, never will be sick and sorry, never can be sick and sorry. The ideal, cheerful, sensuous, pagan life is not sick or sorry. No; yet its natural end is in the sort of life which Pompeii and Herculaneum bring so vividly before us ; a life which by no means in itself suggests the thought of horror and misery, which even, in many ways, gratifies the senses and the understanding ; but by the very intensity and unremittingness of its appeal to the senses and the understanding, by its stimulating a single side of us too absolutely, ends by fatiguing and revolting us ; ends by leaving us with a sense of tightness, of oppression, with a desire for an utter change, for clouds, storms, effusion and relief.

In the beginning of the thirteenth century, when the clouds and storms

had come, when the gay sensuous pagan life was gone, when men were not living by the senses and understanding, when they were looking for the speedy coming of Antichrist, there appeared in Italy, to the north of Rome, in the beautiful Umbrian country at the foot of the Apennines, a figure of the most magical power and charm, St. Francis. His century is, I think, the most interesting in the history of Christianity after its primitive age; more interesting than even the century of the Reformation; and one of the chief figures, perhaps the very chief, to which this interest attaches itself, is St. Francis. And why? Because of the profound popular instinct which enabled him, more than any man since the primitive age, to fit religion for popular use. He brought religion to the people. He founded the most popular body of ministers of religion that has ever existed in the Church. He transformed monachism by uprooting the stationary monk, delivering him from the bondage of property, and sending him, as a mendicant friar, to be a stranger and sojourner, not in the wilderness, but in the most crowded haunts of men, to console them and to do them good. This popular interest of his is at the bottom of his famous marriage with poverty. Poverty and suffering are the condition of the people, the multitude, the immense majority of mankind, and it was towards this *people* that his soul yearned. "He listens," it was said of him, "to those to whom God himself will not listen."

So in return, as no other man he was listened to. When an Umbrian town or village heard of his approach, the whole population went out in joyful procession to meet him, with green boughs, flags, music, and songs of gladness. The master, who began with two disciples, could in his own lifetime (and he died at forty-four) collect to keep Whitsuntide with him, in presence of an immense multitude, five thousand of his Minorites. He found fulfilment to his prophetic cry: "I hear in my ears the sound of the tongues of all the nations who shall come unto us; Frenchmen, Spaniards, Germans, Englishmen. The Lord will make of us a great people, even unto the ends of the earth."

Prose could not satisfy this ardent soul, and he made poetry. Latin was too learned for this simple, popular nature, and he composed in his mother tongue, in Italian. The beginnings of the mundane poetry of the Italians are in Sicily, at the court of kings; the beginnings of their religious poetry are in Umbria, with St. Francis. His are the humble upper waters of a mighty stream; at the beginning of the thirteenth century it is St. Francis, at the end, Dante. Now it happens that St. Francis, too, like the Alexandrian songstress, has his hymn for the sun, for Adonis; *Canticle of the Sun*, *Canticle of the Creatures*, the poem goes by both names. Like the Alexandrian hymn, it is designed for popular use, but not for use by King Ptolemy's people; artless in language, irregular in rhythm, it matches with the childlike genius that produced it, and the simple natures that loved and repeated it.

"O most high, almighty, good Lord God, to thee belong praise, glory, honour, and all blessing.

"Praised be my Lord God with all his creatures ; and specially our brother the sun, who brings us the day, and who brings us the light ; fair is he, and shining with a very great splendour ; O Lord, he signifies to us thee.

"Praised be my Lord for our sister the moon, and for the stars, the which he has set clear and lovely in heaven.

"Praised be my Lord for our brother the wind, and for air and cloud, calms and all weather, by the which thou upholdest in life all creatures.

"Praised be my Lord for our sister water, who is very serviceable unto us, and humble, and precious, and clean.

"Praised be my Lord for our brother fire, through whom thou givest us light in the darkness ; and he is bright, and pleasant, and very mighty, and strong.

"Praised be my Lord for our mother the earth, the which doth sustain us and keep us, and bringeth forth divers fruits, and flowers of many colours, and grass.

"Praised be my Lord for all those who pardon one another for his love's sake, and who endure weakness and tribulation ; blessed are they who peaceably shall endure ; for thou, O most Highest, shalt give them a crown.

"Praised be my Lord for our sister, the death of the body ; from whom no man escapeth. Woe to him who dieth in mortal sin ! Blessed are they who are found walking by thy most holy will, for the second death shall have no power to do them harm.

"Praise ye, and bless ye the Lord, and give thanks unto him, and serve him with great humility."

It is natural that man should take pleasure in his senses. It is natural, also, that he should take refuge in his heart and imagination from his misery. When one thinks what human life is for the vast majority of mankind, how little of a feast for their senses it can possibly be, one understands the charm for them of a refuge offered in the heart and imagination. Above all, when one thinks what human life was in the Middle Ages, one understands the charm of such a refuge.

Now, the poetry of Theocritus's hymn is poetry treating the world according to the demand of the senses ; the poetry of St. Francis's hymn is poetry treating the world according to the demand of the heart and imagination. The first takes the world by its outward, sensible side ; the second by its inward, symbolical side. The first admits as much of the world as is pleasure-giving, the second admits the whole world, rough and smooth, painful and pleasure-giving, all alike, but all transfigured by the power of a spiritual emotion, all brought under a law of supernatural love, having its seat in the soul. It can thus even say : "Praised be my Lord for our sister, the death of the body."

But these very words are an indication that we are touching upon an extreme. When we see Pompeii, we can put our finger upon the pagan sentiment in its extreme. And when we read of Monte Alverno and the *stigmata*, when we read of the repulsive, because self-caused, sufferings of the end of St. Francis's life, when we find him saying : "I have sinned

against my brother the ass," meaning by these words that he had been too hard upon his own body, when we find him doubting "whether he who had destroyed himself by the severity of his penances could find mercy in eternity," we can put our finger on the mediæval Christian sentiment in its extreme. Human nature is neither all senses and understanding, nor all heart and imagination. Pompeii was a sign that for humanity at large the measure of sensualism had been over-passed; St. Francis's doubt was a sign that for humanity at large the measure of spiritualism had been over-passed. Humanity, in its violent rebound from one extreme, had swung from Pompeii to Monte Alverno; but it was sure not to stay there.

The Renaissance is, in part, a return towards the pagan spirit, in the special sense in which I have been using the word pagan; a return towards the life of the senses and the understanding. The Reformation, on the other hand, is the very opposite to this; in Luther there is nothing Greek or pagan; vehemently as he attacked the adoration of St. Francis, Luther had himself something of St. Francis in him; he was a thousand times more akin to St. Francis than to Theocritus or to Voltaire.* The real Reformation, Luther's Reformation, the German Reformation, was a reaction of the moral and spiritual sense against the carnal and pagan sense; it was a religious revival like St. Francis's, but this time against the Church of Rome, not within her; for the carnal and pagan sense had now, in the government of the Church of Rome herself, its prime representative. The grand reaction against the rule of the heart and imagination, the strong return towards the rule of the senses and understanding, is in the eighteenth century. And this reaction has had no more brilliant champion than a man of the nineteenth, of whom I have already spoken here; a man who could feel not only the pleasureableness but the poetry of the life of the senses (and the life of the senses has its deep poetry); a man who, in his very last poem, divided the whole world into "barbarians and Greeks,"—Henrich Heine. No man has reproached the Monte Alverno extreme in sentiment, the Christian extreme, the heart and imagination subjugating the senses and understanding, more bitterly than Heine; no man has extolled the Pompeii extreme, the pagan extreme, more rapturously.

"All through the Middle Age these sufferings, this fever, this over-tension lasted; and we moderns still feel in all our limbs the pain and weakness from them. Even those of us who are cured have still to live with a hospital-atmosphere all round us, and find ourselves as wretched in it as a strong man among the sick. Some day or other, when humanity shall have got quite well again, when the body and soul shall have made their peace together, the factitious quarrel which Christianity has cooked up between them will appear something hardly comprehensible. The fairer and happier generations, offspring of unfettered unions, that will rise up and bloom in the atmosphere of a religion of pleasure, will smile sadly when they think of their poor ancestors, whose life was passed in melancholy abstinence from the joys of this beautiful earth, and who

faded away into spectres, from the mortal compression which they put upon the warm and glowing emotions of sense. Yes, with assurance I say it, our descendants will be fairer and happier than we are ; for I am a believer in progress, and I hold God to be a kind being who has intended man to be happy."

That is Heine's sentiment, in the prime of life, in the glow of activity, amid the brilliant whirl of Paris. I will no more blame it than I blamed the sentiment of the Greek hymn to Adonis. I wish to decide nothing as of my own authority ; the great art of criticism is to get oneself out of the way and to let humanity decide. Well, the sentiment of the "religion of pleasure" has much that is natural in it; humanity will gladly accept it if it can live by it; to live by it one must never be sick or sorry, and the old, ideal, limited, pagan world never, I have said, *was* sick or sorry, never at least shows itself to us sick or sorry :

What pipes and timbrels! what wild ecstasy!

For our imagination, Gorgo and Praxinoë cross the human stage chattering in their blithe Doric—*like turtles*, as the cross stranger said—and keep gaily chattering on till they disappear. But in the new, real, immense, post-pagan world, in the barbarian world, the shock of accident is unceasing, the serenity of existence is perpetually troubled, not even a Greek like Heine can get across the mortal stage without bitter calamity. How does the sentiment of the "religion of pleasure" serve then? does it help, does it console? Can a man live by it? Heine again shall answer; Heine just twenty years older, stricken with incurable disease, waiting for death:—

"The great pot stands smoking before me, but I have no spoon to help myself. What does it profit me that my health is drunk at banquets out of gold cups and in the most exquisite wines, if I myself, while these ovations are going on, lonely and cut off from the pleasures of the world, can only just wet my lips with barley-water? What good does it do me that all the roses of Shiraz open their leaves and burn for me with passionate tenderness? Alas! Shiraz is some two thousand leagues from the Rue d'Amsterdam, where in the solitude of my sick chamber all the perfume I smell is that of hot towels. Alas! the mockery of God is heavy upon me! The great Author of the universe, the Aristophanes of Heaven, has determined to make the petty earthly author, the so-called Aristophanes of Germany, feel to his heart's core what pitiful needle-pricks his cleverest sarcasms have been, compared with the thunderbolts which his divine humour can launch against feeble mortals! . . .

"In the year, 1840, says the 'Chronicle of Limburg,' all over Germany everybody was strumming and humming certain songs more lovely and delightful than any which had ever yet been known in German countries; and all people, old and young, the women particularly, were perfectly mad about them, so that from morning till night you heard nothing else. Only, the 'Chronicle' adds, the author of these songs happened to be a young clerk afflicted with leprosy, and living apart from all

the world in a desolate place. The excellent reader does not require to be told how horrible a complaint was leprosy in the Middle Ages, and how the poor wretches who had this incurable plague were banished from society, and had to keep at a distance from every human being. Like living corpses, in a grey gown reaching down to the feet, and with the hood brought over their face, they went about, carrying in their hands an enormous rattle, called Saint Lazarus's rattle. With this rattle they gave notice of their approach, that every one might have time to get out of their way. This poor clerk, then, whose poetical gift the 'Limburg Chronicle' extols, was a leper, and he sate moping in the dismal deserts of his misery, whilst all Germany, gay and tuneful, was praising his songs.

"Sometimes, in my sombre visions of the night, I imagine that I see before me the poor leprosy-stricken clerk of the 'Limburg Chronicle,' and from under his grey hood his distressed eyes look out upon one in a fixed and strange fashion; but the next instant he disappears, and I hear dying away in the distance, like the echo of a dream, the dull creak of Saint Lazarus's rattle."

We have come a long way from Theocritus there; the expression of that has nothing of the clear, positive, happy pagan character; it has much more the character of one of the indeterminate grotesques of the suffering Middle Age. Profoundness and power it has, though at the same time it is not truly poetical; it is not natural enough for that, there is too much waywardness in it, too much bravado. But as a condition of sentiment to be popular, to be a comfort for the mass of mankind, under the pressure of calamity, to live by, what a manifest failure is this last word of the religion of pleasure! One man in many millions, a Heine, may console himself and keep himself erect in suffering by a colossal irony of this sort, by covering himself and the universe with the red fire of this sinister mockery; but the many millions cannot—cannot if they would. That is where the sentiment of a religion of sorrow has such a vast advantage over the sentiment of a religion of pleasure, in its power to be a general, popular, religious sentiment, a stay for the mass of mankind, whose lives are full of hardship. It really succeeds in conveying far more joy, far more of what the mass of mankind are so much without, than its rival. I do not mean joy in prospect only, but joy in possession, actual enjoyment of the world. Mediæval Christianity is reproached with its gloom and austerities; it assigns the material world, says Heine, to the devil. But yet what a fulness of delight does St. Francis manage to draw from this material world itself, and from its commonest and most universally enjoyed elements—sun, air, earth, water, plants! His hymn expresses a far more cordial sense of happiness, even in the material world, than the hymn of Theocritus. It is this which made the fortune of mediæval Christianity—its gladness, not its sorrow; not its assigning the spiritual world to Christ and the material world to the devil, but its drawing from the spiritual world a source of joy so abundant that it ran over upon the material world and transfigured it.

I have said a great deal of harm of paganism; and, taking paganism to mean a state of things which it is commonly taken to mean, and which did really exist, no more harm than it well deserved. Yet I must not end without reminding the reader that before this state of things appeared, there was an epoch in Greek life—in pagan life—of the highest possible beauty and value; an epoch which alone goes far towards making Greece the Greece we mean when we speak of Greece,—a country hardly less important to mankind than Judæa. The poetry of later paganism lived by the senses and understanding; the poetry of mediæval Christianity lived by the heart and imagination. But the main element of the modern spirit's life is neither the senses and understanding, nor the heart and imagination; it is the imaginative reason. And there is a century in Greek life,—the century preceding the Peloponnesian war, from about the year 580 B.C. to about the year 480,—in which poetry made, it seems to me, the noblest, the most successful effort she has ever made as the priestess of the imaginative reason, of the element by which the modern spirit, if it would live right, has chiefly to live. Of this effort, of which the four great names are Simonides, Pindar, Æschylus, Sophocles, I must not now attempt more than the bare mention; but it is right, it is necessary, after all I have said, to indicate it. No doubt that effort was imperfect. Perhaps everything, take it at what point in its existence you will, carries within itself the fatal law of its own ulterior development. Perhaps, even of the life of Pindar's time, Pompeii was the inevitable bourne. Perhaps the life of their beautiful Greece could not afford to its poets all that fulness of varied experience, all that power of emotion, which

. the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world

affords to the poet of after-times. Perhaps in Sophocles the thinking-power a little overbalances the religious sense, as in Dante the religious sense overbalances the thinking-power. The present has to make its own poetry, and not even Sophocles and his compeers, any more than Dante and Shakespeare, are enough for it. That I will not dispute. But no other poets so well show to the poetry of the present the way it must take; no other poets have lived so much by the imaginative reason; no other poets have made their work so well balanced; no other poets, who have so well satisfied the thinking-power, have so well satisfied the religious sense.

"Oh, that my lot may lead me in the path of holy innocence of word and deed, the path which august laws ordain, laws that in the highest empyrean had their birth, of which Heaven is the father alone, neither did the race of mortal men beget them, nor shall oblivion ever put them to sleep. The power of God is mighty in them, and growth not old."

Let Theocritus or St. Francis beat that!

MATTHEW ARNOLD

On Words best Left Unsaid.

IN Walter Savage Landor's *Pericles and Aspasia* there occurs the following little passage: "My opinion is, that what is best for us is our admiration of good;" one of many excellent observations in a very charming book. And not only the best, but by far the pleasantest thing for us too, one would be inclined to think, this same admiration for what is good, if one were not met by the melancholy fact that for a single chivalrous heart content, after a lapse of nearly three hundred years, to devote a lifetime of generous patience to the rehabilitation of a Bacon, one sees hundreds who appear only to exist for the strange pleasure of "lending a hand at undoing."

Yet when the charmed hours have gone by unheeded in the delighted perusal of such books as Carlyle's *Life of John Sterling*, Mrs. Oliphant's *Life of Irving*, and Lewes's *Goethe* (where, in spite of a strong vein of enthusiastic partiality, all the many sides of the complicated human machine are given with tolerable fairness, and the reader left, according to his own lights, to piece together the character of the man described), one wonders where can be found the market for the biographical notices of distinguished persons which occasionally come before the world, and in which there does not appear to exist the trace of a belief in any one great quality of their nature in any even accidental good action of their lives, or even in any occasional fine movement of their hearts; and one can but marvel how, in such cases, the ungrateful task should ever have been undertaken.

What could be more painful than the mention made of Nelson in Mrs. Trench's diary? And if after the lapse of years this brief, incidental, but deplorable notice was so unspeakably disagreeable, what shall be said of the more important articles that, at different times, have made their appearance in various reviews upon Rossini still living—and whose sensitiveness to the opinion of his fellow creatures may well have been stung by the picture given of him to the world?

I came, not very long ago, upon a biographical sketch of his life, in which every quality, great or small, the possession of which makes men to be respected when living, and honoured when dead, was denied to him. Intriguing, unscrupulous, irretrievably false, irredeemably base, and of an envious jealousy, that rendered him incapable of appreciating or allowing the merit of any other man; these are the chief characteristics of the portrait drawn of him in a very generally read journal; and while numberless degrading anecdotes (raked from what miry sources Heaven only knows!) were brought in evidence of these various accusa-

tions, not one was recollected that could tell of happier moments of his mind. Yet one would think that, over so large a space of existence, there must have shone some occasional ray, however faint, of a diviner light, for the benefit of such of his biographers as did not close their eyes against it.

Some few years back, before he went to Paris, where he is now permanently established, I, who am writing this, had the fortunate chance of seeing a good deal of him; he had been for a long while ill, and was then in an altogether deplorable condition of both mind and body: yet even under these adverse circumstances, how charming his company was!

A shrewd observer—a brilliant satirist—in his manner courteous and kind—his judgments full of a fine discrimination and the wisest common sense—his conversation brimming over with fancies the wildest, wittiest, and most humorous—what dazzling company it was! A burning, shining light, not to be extinguished by suffering, or subdued even by the forlorn aspect of a hired lodging in an Italian country town, and the incessant attendance of three medical men.

For a certain droll happiness of expression, I have never seen his equal. Latterly, among the many musical burdens which his eminent position in the artistic world compels him to carry, there arrived at his house an unfortunate gentleman, with musical glasses (finger glasses) so harmoniously tuned together, as to admit a fatal possibility of executing upon them the well-known "*Dal tuo stellato soglio*"—the famous prayer from the *Mosè in Egitto*—of the great master himself; a tribute the luckless performer thought certain to touch the heart and propitiate the vanity of the composer. Rossini, driven beyond all bounds of patience by the abomination of the thing, fled into another apartment, followed by some of his friends, who for a little while endeavoured in vain to persuade him to return. At length, upon its being represented to him that the poor professor's feelings would be wounded by his prolonged absence during the performance, he said, with an accent of profound melancholy, "*C'est bon—c'est bon—je reviendrai aussitôt que ce monsieur aura fini de rincer ma prière.*"

Who that heard it can ever forget the humorous description he gave one evening of a certain carnival season, during the whole of which he assiduously attended every masked ball that took place, for the sole pleasure of contemplating a stout middle-aged English gentleman who never missed one of them, who was there from the first note to the last of each; who never, on any one occasion, opened his lips to a living soul; and who was never once himself addressed by a single human creature; but who continued to prosper, night after night, in a state of mysterious but perfect contentment, attired as Harlequin?

Nothing can be less true than that Rossini does not do proper justice to the genius of other composers. As a general rule, he has less sympathy with German than with Italian art, but this is simply a matter of national feeling; and he is far too great himself not to know what is great in others,

though their manner may not be his. He is familiar with the works of all the most eminent German masters, and used frequently to speak with delight of Weber, whose abundant flow of clear melody appealed strongly to his southern organization.

On one occasion, happening to mention some music which had been executed at my house on the previous evening, he inquired what we had sung.

"Something of Rossini's," said I.

"Do not sing that music, it is out of date!" he answered, with a gentle irony. "And what beside?"

"Something of Mendelssohn's," I replied.

"Then you sang something that was beautiful, and distinguished, and tender, and delicate," was his immediate observation; the warmest and readiest acknowledgment of the genius of another man, evidently entirely sincere, from the admirable spontaneous selection of the particular epithets used, and a very sufficient refutation of the stupid calumny which would deny to a man of his brains (putting the question as one of mere intelligence) the capability of admiring the work of any other master.

On another occasion, when I was spending the evening at his house, an animated conversation arose, in which the unavoidable and desirable necessity of lying in all its various forms was advocated by the whole society; and to cringe, intrigue, flatter, and deceive, was unanimously declared to be the obvious and inevitable duty of every one who meant to find his proper place, and hold it, in the world. The grand argument was, that as no one could or would endure the truth, there was nothing left for it but to lie, if one did not wish to see one's friends converted into deadliest enemies. I mentioned the circumstance of a man who, at a single sitting, had sung me twelve of his own compositions, one more hideous than other, to whom I had honestly told my mind, and who had remained my fast friend nevertheless. Rossini immediately capped this with a whimsical description of a visit which he had once received from a gentleman who had brought an opera with him: "As he told me," said Rossini, "for the sincere expression of my opinion, the advantage of my criticism, and, above all, for the benefit of my suggestions. He lied himself when he said it: what he wanted was what they all want—not at all one's opinion, but one's unqualified approval. We put the music on the piano, and he began—I listened with patience to some twenty pages, and then—'You wish me to be really sincere?' said I, and I pointed out a passage that was more particularly objectionable than the rest. He hardly gave me time to speak—'Dear master,' he replied, 'I think if you will only reconsider the page which precedes, you must see that the passage you condemn is a strictly necessary consequence.' 'If it is necessary, let us speak of it no more,' said I, and proceeded. After a little while, I ventured to indicate some slight modification of another part which called loudly for correction. 'But,' said he, 'dear master, if you will only give one glance at the page which follows, I am sure you will

perceive that this is absolutely essential, and that any alteration here would ruin the whole effect.' 'If it would ruin the effect,' said I, 'of course it is not to be thought of'—and we went on: at last it became wearisome, so I shut the book, and said to him, 'Mio caro signore, questa vostra musica è la musica la più — (a vigorous Italian adjective, for which he had the grace to beg our pardon), 'ch'io abbia mai sentito in vita mia.' 'Eh bien, ce monsieur ne m'a jamais plus aimé!'"* he added, in a plaintive voice, and looking round upon us with a kind of mild surprise that made us all die of laughing.

There was abundance of droll and clever talk among that small knot of unscrupulous Italians, as, half in jest, half in earnest, they propped their pleasant little theory of falsehood. But the whole thing by degrees grew to be very dreary and ugly; and, drearier than all the rest, the master himself, bowed down with pain and sickness, pacing backwards and forwards in the midst of us, and stopping every now and then to place some felicitous cynical remark, or to tell some irresistibly humorous story entirely to the honour of the father of lies. At last, as he came up to the end of the room where I sat, and was preparing to turn, I stopped him, and asked whether he supposed that Felix Mendelssohn had achieved his earthly honours through cringing, lying, or baseness of any sort?

"Ah, let us not speak of him!" he said, immediately becoming serious; and then added, with the deepest feeling, "Mendelssohn was an angel on the earth."

This was no tribute of his intelligence to genius, but the loving acknowledgment of something nobler and better still—the single nature of one of the purest-hearted of men.

One day when he was calling upon us, a lady came in who had been a professional singer, but who had long since left the stage, and was now among the most constant of his visitors and devoted of his admirers.

"How well I remember you at Bologna, with your father," he said; "that was years ago. You never once came to see me then, though. All the other prime donne used to come; why didn't you?"

"Because they did," she replied. "You were all-potent there then, and you might have fancied I came for the use you could be of to me; now I no longer need you, and when I come I know you are sure that only respect and pure gratitude bring me." He burst into tears, and, taking both her hands, exclaimed, "Oh cara, cuori così non si trovano più in questo mondo—nò, non si trovano più!"†

What thieves the man must have fallen among to be so overcome by a simple expression of disinterested regard!

I have seen Rossini's eyes fill with tears at the beauty of a little child,

* "My dear sir, this music of yours is the most — music that I ever heard in the whole course of my life." Well, that gentleman never loved me any more afterwards."

† "Ah, my dear, such hearts are to be found no more in this world—no, they are to be found no more!"

and although this manifestation of emotion may possibly have indicated nothing of much greater value than a rather refined degree of artistic sensibility, those dews of tenderness might have blazed out as jewels of virtue from the midst of the collection of dismal anecdotes which his biographers have cared to treasure up against him.

Another very hopeless piece of private history is the *Life of Mademoiselle Rachel*, which I met with in a country house the other day, and took up to my room to read, as my custom is, before going to sleep at night; and as I read I could not help wondering what could have been the temptation, artistic or other, for laying bare to the world such dry and cheerless details of any human soul, and how any one who had ever thrilled with the terrible grace of her "Roxane," or been haunted by the woe-begone pathos of her "Oh, mon cher Curiace!" should not have shrunk back from the act, as from one almost of ingratitude. The book recalled very vividly to my mind a circumstance which I had almost forgotten, but which at the time made a considerable impression upon me, and, as our French neighbours say, "gave me to think."

Some years ago, when Mademoiselle Rachel was trying the climate of Egypt as a sort of forlorn hope during the fatal illness which deprived the world of an unrivalled artist, she suddenly sent directions to Paris for the sale of her furniture and of the small hotel in which she had resided. I was living in Paris at the time, and having been told by some one who had been to see the rooms, of a certain wonderful Italian cabinet, went to ascertain whether it might be likely to suit the dimensions of my purse, and of an apartment I was just then engaged in furnishing. There was a curious want of taste apparent in every detail of the decoration of the house. Rachel's costumes upon the stage had always been so admirably devised, that one would have imagined that some trace of the artistic feeling which had guided her so successfully in this minor branch of her art, would probably again be found in the objects by which she had lived surrounded. But no; there were many costly things, hardly any beautiful ones; and all looked too large for the places they occupied, and as if in the selection of them their money value had been the only matter taken into consideration. On looking at them, one came to the conclusion that her perfect theatrical dresses were probably not the work of her own fancy, but invented for her by some clever painter among her friends. The house was a miniature compendium of discomfort; the rooms as stuffy, small, and low as the ladies' cabin of a small steamer; and the ceilings and walls overlaid in every direction with massive gilding that looked heavy enough to pull them down; on the chimney-piece in the tiny drawing-room stood some colossal candelabra with gigantic branches, which would hardly have looked small upon the Place de la Concorde. The only article of real beauty in the way of furniture, was the ebony cabinet I had gone to see, which had been banished to a loge in the entrance court just opposite the concierge's den, where persons who

came upon business were made to wait until the great actress chose to be visible.

Everything was just as she had left it, for the poor thing had gone off, they said, almost at a moment's notice; and it was painful to see the crowd carelessly handling the little intimate knick-knacks, so worthless and withal perhaps so precious, which were lying about in every direction, and which, in that desperate flight for life into a warmer air, had been forgotten and left behind. There was nothing the women of the party did not pry into and overhaul; even unhooking the family miniatures from the wall for more minute inspection, in spite of the information gratuitously tendered by the concierge that "those were not to be included in the sale."

Rather annoyed by the clamorous remarks and somewhat indecorous curiosity of my fellow sight-seers, I let the string of visitors proceed upstairs to the rooms upon the second floor, before I made my way into a little dark hole leading out of the drawing-room, which I had heard my noisy predecessors dignify by the high-sounding title of the *Boudoir Chinois*. It was an absolute hole, and so pitch dark, that I was for some minutes in it before my eyes were able to distinguish a Chinese paper, with birds and flowers upon it, and one or two little brackets supporting Chinese pots, which stood in the angles of the walls, and in virtue of which I suppose the room obtained its name. I was just preparing to go upstairs, when a bust in white marble, which stood upon the chimney-piece, attracted my attention; the head was of a young and handsome man, with a shortish beard divided into two points, and round the neck there hung a rosary—forgotten like so many other things in the distress of that departure. I was greatly struck by this detail, and waited impatiently for the return of the concierge, whom I heard conveying the other party to the door.

At last he came, and anxious to ascertain on which of her adorers poor Rachel had left this singular necklace hanging, I immediately inquired—"De qui est ce buste?"

"C'est de Canova," was the reply.

"Mais de qui est-ce le portrait?" I persisted, under the impression that the man did not know what he was speaking about.

"C'est le portrait du Christ."

The ebony cabinet was too large for my room, and I left the house somewhat bewildered with the confusion of ideas created by the curious assemblage of heterogeneous objects I had seen there, and strangely moved by the remembrance of that image of our blessed Lord in Rachel's Chinese boudoir with the poor dying Jewess's rosary hung about his neck. Surely when nothing can be added to a great name, it might be permitted to lie still.

The Small House at Allington.

CHAPTER LVIII.

THE FATE OF THE SMALL HOUSE.



HERE was something in the tone of Mrs. Dale's voice, as she desired her daughter to come up to the house, and declared that her budget of news should be opened there, which at once silenced Lily's assumed pleasantry. Her mother had been away fully two hours, during which Lily had still continued her walk round the garden, till at last she had become impatient for her mother's footstep. Something serious must have been said between her uncle and her mother during those long two hours. The interviews to which Mrs. Dale was occasionally summoned at the Great House did not

usually exceed twenty minutes, and the upshot would be communicated to the girls in a turn or two round the garden; but in the present instance Mrs. Dale positively declined to speak till she was seated within the house.

"Did he come over on purpose to see you, mamma?"

"Yes, my dear, I believe so. He wished to see you, too; but I asked his permission to postpone that till after I had talked to you."

"To see me, mamma? About what?"

"To kiss you, and bid you love him; solely for that. He has not a word to say to you that will vex you."

"Then I will kiss him, and love him too."

"Yes, you will when I have told you all. I have promised him solemnly to give up all idea of going to Guestwick. So that is over."

"Oh, oh! And we may begin to unpack at once? What an episode in one's life!"

"We may certainly unpack, for I have pledged myself to him; and he is to go into Guestwick himself and arrange about the lodgings."

"Does Hopkins know it?"

"I should think not yet."

"Nor Mrs. Boyce! Mamma, I don't believe I shall be able to survive this next week. We shall look such fools! I'll tell you what we'll do;—it will be the only comfort I can have;—we'll go to work and get everything back into its place before Bell comes home, so as to surprise her."

"What! in two days?"

"Why not? I'll make Hopkins come and help, and then he'll not be so bad. I'll begin at once and go to the blankets and beds, because I can undo them myself."

"But I haven't half told you all; and, indeed, I don't know how to make you understand what passed between us. He is very unhappy about Bernard; Bernard has determined to go abroad, and may be away for years."

"One can hardly blame a man for following up his profession."

"There was no blaming. He only said that it was very sad for him that, in his old age, he should be left alone. This was before there was any talk about our remaining. Indeed he seemed determined not to ask that again as a favour. I could see that in his eye, and I understood it from his tone. He went on to speak of you and Bell, saying how well he loved you both; but that, unfortunately, his hopes regarding you had not been fulfilled."

"Ah, but he shouldn't have had hopes of that sort."

"Listen, my dear, and I think that you will not feel angry with him. He said that he felt his house had never been pleasant to you. Then there followed words which I could not repeat, even if I could remember them. He said much about myself, regretting that the feeling between us had not been more kindly. 'But my heart,' he said, 'has ever been kinder than my words.' Then I got up from where I was seated, and going over to him, I told him that we would remain here."

"And what did he say?"

"I don't know what he said. I know that I was crying and that he kissed me. It was the first time in his life. I know that he was pleased,—beyond measure pleased. After a while he became animated, and talked of doing ever so many things. He promised that very painting of which you spoke."

"Ah, yes, I knew it; and Hopkins will be here with the peas before dinner-time to-morrow, and Dingles with his shoulders smothered with rabbits. And then Mrs. Boyce! Mamma, he didn't think of Mrs. Boyce; or, in very charity of heart, he would still have maintained his sadness."

"Then he did not think of her; for when I left him he was not at all sad. But I haven't told you half yet."

"Dear me, mamma; was there more than that?"

"And I've told it all wrong; for what I've got to tell now was said before a word was spoken about the house. He brought it in just after what he said about Bernard. He said that Bernard would, of course, be his heir."

"Of course he will."

"And that he should think it wrong to encumber the property with any charges for you girls."

"Mamma, did any one ever——"

"Stop, Lily, stop; and make your heart kinder towards him if you can."

"It is kind; only I hate to be told that I'm not to have a lot of money, as though I had ever shown a desire for it. I have never envied Bernard his man-servant, or his maid-servant, or his ox, or his ass, or anything that is his. To tell the truth I didn't even wish it to be Bell's, because I knew well that there was somebody she would like a great deal better than ever she could like Bernard."

"I shall never get to the end of my story."

"Yes, you will, mamma, if you persevere."

"The long and the short of it is this, that he has given Bell three thousand pounds, and has given you three thousand also."

"But why me, mamma?" said Lily, and the colour of her cheeks became red as she spoke. There should if possible be nothing more said about John Eames; but whatever might or might not be the necessity of speaking, at any rate, let there be no mistake. "But why me, mamma?"

"Because, as he explained to me, he thinks it right to do the same by each of you. The money is yours at this moment,—to buy hair-pins with, if you please. I had no idea that he could command so large a sum."

"Three thousand pounds! The last money he gave me was half-a-crown, and I thought that he was so stingy! I particularly wanted ten shillings. I should have liked it so much better now if he had given me a nice new five-pound note."

"You'd better tell him so."

"No; because then he'd give me that too. But with five pounds I should have the feeling that I might do what I liked with it;—buy a dressing-case, and a thing for a squirrel to run round in. But nobody ever gives girls money like that, so that they can enjoy it."

"Oh, Lily; you ungrateful child!"

"No, I deny it. I'm not ungrateful. I'm very grateful, because his heart was softened,—and because he cried and kissed you. I'll be ever so good to him! But how I'm to thank him for giving me three thousand pounds, I cannot think. It's a sort of thing altogether beyond my line of life. It sounds like something that's to come to me in another world, but which I don't want quite yet. I am grateful, but with a misty, mazy sort of gratitude. Can you tell me how soon I shall have a new pair of Balmoral boots because of this money? If that were brought home to me I think it would enliven my gratitude."

The squire, as he rode back to Guestwick, fell again from that animation which Mrs. Dale had described, into his natural sombre mood. He thought much of his past life, declaring to himself the truth of those words in which he had told his sister-in-law that his heart had ever

been kinder than his words. But the world, and all those nearest to him in the world, had judged him always by his words rather than by his heart. They had taken the appearance, which he could not command or alter, rather than the facts, of which he had been the master. Had he not been good to all his relations?—and yet was there one among them that cared for him? “I’m almost sorry that they are going to stay,” he said to himself;—“I know that I shall disappoint them.” Yet when he met Bell at the Manor House he accosted her cheerily, telling her with much appearance of satisfaction that that flitting into Guestwick was not to be accomplished.

“I am so glad,” said she. “It is long since I wished it.”

“And I do not think your mother wishes it now.”

“I am sure she does not. It was all a misunderstanding from the first. When some of us could not do all that you wished, we thought it better——” Then Bell paused, finding that she would get herself into a mess if she persevered.

“We will not say any more about it,” said the squire. “The thing is over, and I am very glad that it should be so pleasantly settled. I was talking to Dr. Crofts yesterday.”

“Were you, uncle?”

“Yes; and he is to come and stay with me the day before he is married. We have arranged it all. And we’ll have the breakfast up at the Great House. Only you must fix the day. I should say some time in March. And, my dear, you’ll want to make yourself fine; here’s a little money for you. You are to spend that before your marriage, you know.” Then he shambled away, and as soon as he was alone, again became sad and despondent. He was a man for whom we may predicate some gentle sadness and continued despondency to the end of his life’s chapter.

We left John Eames in the custody of Lady Julia, who had overtaken him in the act of erasing Lily’s name from the railing which ran across the brook. He had been premeditating an escape home to his mother’s house in Guestwick, and thence back to London, without making any further appearance at the Manor House. But as soon as he heard Lady Julia’s step, and saw her figure close upon him, he knew that his retreat was cut off from him. So he allowed himself to be led away quietly up to the house. With Lady Julia herself he openly discussed the whole matter,—telling her that his hopes were over, his happiness gone, and his heart half-broken. Though he would perhaps have cared but little for her congratulations in success, he could make himself more amenable to consolation and sympathy from her than from any other inmate in the earl’s house. “I don’t know what I shall say to your brother,” he whispered to her, as they approached the side door at which she intended to enter.

“Will you let me break it to him? After that he will say a few words to you of course, but you need not be afraid of him.”

"And Mr. Dale?" said Johnny. "Everybody has heard about it. Everybody will know what a fool I have made myself." She suggested that the earl should speak to the squire, assured him that nobody would think him at all foolish, and then left him to make his way up to his own bedroom. When there he found a letter from Cradell, which had been delivered in his absence; but the contents of that letter may best be deferred to the next chapter. They were not of a nature to give him comfort or to add to his sorrow.

About an hour before dinner there was a knock at his door, and the earl himself, when summoned, made his appearance in the room. He was dressed in his usual farming attire, having been caught by Lady Julia on his first approach to the house, and had come away direct to his young friend, after having been duly trained in what he ought to say by his kind-hearted sister. I am not, however, prepared to declare that he strictly followed his sister's teaching in all that he said upon the occasion.

"Well, my boy," he began, "so the young lady has been perverse."

"Yes, my lord, That is, I don't know about being perverse. It is all over."

"That's as may be, Johnny. As far as I know, not half of them accept their lovers the first time of asking."

"I shall not ask her again."

"Oh, yes, you will. You don't mean to say you are angry with her for refusing you."

"Not in the least. I have no right to be angry. I am only angry with myself for being such a fool, Lord De Guest. I wish I had been dead before I came down here on this errand. Now I think of it, I know there are so many things which ought to have made me sure how it would be."

"I don't see that at all. You come down again,—let me see,—it's May now. Say you come when the shooting begins in September. If we can't get you leave of absence in any other way, we'll make old Buffle come too. Only, by George, I believe he'd shoot us all. But never mind; we'll manage that. You keep up your spirits till September, and then we'll fight the battle in another way. The squire shall get up a little party for the bride, and my lady Lily must go then. You shall meet her so; and then we'll shoot over the squire's land. We'll bring you together so; you see if we don't. Lord bless me! Refused once! My belief is, that in these days a girl thinks nothing of a man till she has refused him half-a-dozen times."

"I don't think Lily is at all like that."

"Look here, Johnny. I have not a word to say against Miss Lily. I like her very much, and think her one of the nicest girls I know. When she's your wife, I'll love her dearly, if she'll let me. But she's made of the same stuff as other girls, and will act in the same way. Things have gone a little astray among you, and they won't right themselves all in a minute. She knows now what your feelings are, and she'll

go on thinking of it, till at last you'll be in her thoughts more than that other fellow. Don't tell me about her becoming an old maid, because at her time of life she has been so unfortunate as to come across a false-hearted man like that. It may take a little time; but if you'll carry on and not be down-hearted, you'll find it will all come right in the end. Everybody doesn't get all that they want in a minute. How I shall quiz you about all this when you have been two or three years married!"

"I don't think I shall ever be able to ask her again; and I feel sure, if I do, that her answer will be the same. She told me in so many words——; but never mind, I cannot repeat her words."

"I don't want you to repeat them; nor yet to heed them beyond their worth. Lily Dale is a very pretty girl; clever, too, I believe, and good, I'm sure; but her words are not more sacred than those of other men or women. What she has said to you now, she means, no doubt; but the minds of men and women are prone to change, especially when such changes are conducive to their own happiness."

"At any rate I'll never forget your kindness, Lord De Guest."

"And there is one other thing I want to say to you, Johnny. A man should never allow himself to be cast down by anything,—not outwardly, to the eyes of other men."

"But how is he to help it?"

"His pluck should prevent him. You were not afraid of a roaring bull, nor yet of that man when you thrashed him at the railway station. You've pluck enough of that kind. You must now show that you've that other kind of pluck. You know the story of the boy who would not cry though the wolf was gnawing him underneath his frock. Most of us have some wolf to gnaw us somewhere; but we are generally gnawed beneath our clothes, so that the world doesn't see, and it behoves us so to bear it that the world shall not suspect. The man who goes about declaring himself to be miserable will be not only miserable, but contemptible as well."

"But the wolf hasn't gnawed me beneath my clothes; everybody knows it."

"Then let those who do know it learn that you are able to bear such wounds without outward complaint. I tell you fairly that I cannot sympathize with a lackadaisical lover."

"I know that I have made myself ridiculous to everybody. I wish I had never come here. I wish you had never seen me."

"Don't say that, my dear boy; but take my advice for what it is worth. And remember what it is that I say; with your grief I do sympathize, but not with any outward expression of it;—not with melancholy looks, and a sad voice, and an unhappy gait. A man should always be able to drink his wine and seem to enjoy it. If he can't, he is so much less of a man than he would be otherwise,—not so much more, as some people seem to think. Now get yourself dressed, my dear fellow, and come down to dinner as though nothing had happened to you."

As soon as the earl was gone John looked at his watch and saw that it still wanted some forty minutes to dinner. Fifteen minutes would suffice for him to dress, and therefore there was time sufficient for him to seat himself in his arm-chair and think over it all. He had for a moment been very angry when his friend had told him that he could not sympathize with a lackadaisical lover. It was an ill-natured word. He felt it to be so when he heard it, and so he continued to think during the whole of the half-hour that he sat in that chair. But it probably did him more good than any word that the earl had ever spoken to him,—or any other word that he could have used. "Lackadaisical! I'm not lackadaisical," he said to himself, jumping up from his chair, and instantly sitting down again. "I didn't say anything to him. I didn't tell him. Why did he come to me?" And yet, though he endeavoured to abuse Lord De Guest in his thoughts, he knew that Lord De Guest was right, and that he was wrong. He knew that he had been lackadaisical, and was ashamed of himself; and at once resolved that he would henceforth demean himself as though no calamity had happened to him. "I've a good mind to take him at his word, and drink wine till I'm drunk." Then he strove to get up his courage by a song.

If she be not fair for me,
What care I how—

"But I do care. What stuff it is a man writing poetry and putting into it such lies as that! Everybody knows that he did care,—that is, if he wasn't a heartless beast."

But nevertheless, when the time came for him to go down into the drawing-room he did make the effort which his friend had counselled, and walked into the room with less of that hang-dog look than the earl and Lady Julia had expected. They were both there, as was also the squire, and Bell followed him in less than a minute.

"You haven't seen Crofts to-day, John, have you?" said the earl.

"No; I haven't been anywhere his way!"

"His way! His ways are every way, I take it. I wanted him to come and dine, but he seemed to think it improper to eat two dinners in the same house two days running. Isn't that his theory, Miss Dale?"

"I'm sure I don't know, Lord De Guest. At any rate, it isn't mine."

So they went to their feast, and before his last chance was over John Eames found himself able to go through the pretence of enjoying his roast mutton.

There can, I think, be no doubt that in all such calamities as that which he was now suffering the agony of the misfortune is much increased by the conviction that the facts of the case are known to those round about the sufferer. A most warm-hearted and intensely-feeling young gentleman might, no doubt, eat an excellent dinner after being refused by the girl of his devotions, provided that he had reason to believe that none of those in whose company he ate it knew anything of his rejection. But

the same warm-hearted and intensely-feeling young gentleman would find it very difficult to go through the ceremony with any appearance of true appetite or gastronomic enjoyment, if he were aware that all his convives knew all the facts of his little misfortune. Generally, we may suppose, a man in such condition goes to his club for his dinner, or seeks consolation in the shades of some adjacent Richmond or Hampton Court. There he meditates on his condition in silence, and does ultimately enjoy his little plate of whitebait, his cutlet, and his moderate pint of sherry. He probably goes alone to the theatre, and, in his stall, speculates with a somewhat bitter sarcasm on the vanity of the world. Then he returns home, sad indeed, but with a moderated sadness, and as he puffs out the smoke of his cigar at the open window,—with perhaps the comfort of a little brandy-and-water at his elbow,—swears to himself that, “By Jove, he’ll have another try for it.” Alone, a man may console himself, or among a crowd of unconscious mortals; but it must be admitted that the position of John Eames was severe. He had been invited down there to woo Lily Dale, and the squire and Bell had been asked to be present at the wooing. Had it all gone well, nothing could have been nicer. He would have been the hero of the hour, and everybody would have sung for him his song of triumph. But everything had not gone well, and he found it very difficult to carry himself otherwise than lackadaisically. On the whole, however, his effort was such that the earl gave him credit for his demeanour, and told him when parting with him for the night that he was a fine fellow, and that everything should go right with him yet.

“And you mustn’t be angry with me for speaking harshly to you,” he said.

“I wasn’t a bit angry.”

“Yes, you were; and I rather meant that you should be. But you mustn’t go away in dudgeon.”

He stayed at the Manor House one day longer, and then he returned to his room at the Income-tax Office, to the disagreeable sound of Sir Raffle’s little bell, and the much more disagreeable sound of Sir Raffle’s big voice.

CHAPTER LIX.

JOHN EAMES BECOMES A MAN.

EAMES, when he was half way up to London in the railway carriage, took out from his pocket a letter and read it. During the former portion of his journey he had been thinking of other things; but gradually he had resolved that it would be better for him not to think more of those other things for the present, and therefore he had recourse to his letter by way of dissipating his thoughts. It was from Cradell, and ran as follows:—

Income-tax Office, May —, 186—.

MY DEAR JOHN,—I hope the tidings which I have to give you will not make you angry, and that you will not think I am untrue to the great friendship which I have for you because of that which I am now going to tell you. There is no *man*—[and the word *man* was underscored]—there is no *man* whose regard I value so highly as I do yours; and though I feel that you can have no just ground to be displeased with me after all that I have heard you say on many occasions, nevertheless, in matters of the heart it is very hard for one person to understand the sentiments of another, and when the affections of a lady are concerned, I know that quarrels will sometimes arise.

Eames, when he had got so far as this, on the first perusal of the letter, knew well what was to follow. "Poor Caudle!" he said to himself; "he's hooked, and he'll never get himself off the hook again."

But let that be as it may, the matter has now gone too far for any alteration to be made by me; nor would any mere earthly inducement suffice to change me. The claims of friendship are very strong, *but those of love are paramount*. Of course I know all that has passed between you and Amelia Roper. Much of this I had heard from you before, but the rest she has now told me with that pure-minded honesty which is the most remarkable feature in her character. She has confessed that at one time she felt attached to you, and that she was induced by your perseverance to allow you to regard her as your fancy. [Fancy-girl he probably conceived to be the vulgar English for the elegant term which he used.] But all that must be over between you now. *Amelia has promised to be mine*—[this also was underscored]—and mine I intend that she shall be. That you may find in the kind smiles of L. D. consolation for any disappointment which this may occasion you, is the ardent wish of your true friend,
JOSEPH CRADELL.

P.S.—Perhaps I had better tell you the whole. Mrs. Roper has been in some trouble about her house. She is a little in arrears with her rent, and some bills have not been paid. As she has explained that she has been brought into this by those dreadful *Lupexes*, I have consented to take the house into my own hands, and have given bills to one or two tradesmen for small amounts. Of course she will take them up, but it was the credit that was wanting. She will carry on the house, but I shall, in fact, be the proprietor. I suppose it will not suit you now to remain here, but don't you think I might make it comfortable enough for some of our fellows; say half-a-dozen, or so? That is Mrs. Roper's idea, and I certainly think it is not a bad one. Our first effort must be to get rid of the *Lupexes*. Miss Spruce goes next week. In the meantime we are all taking our meals up in our own rooms, so that there is nothing for the *Lupexes* to eat. But they don't seem to mind that, and still keep the sitting-room and best bedroom. We mean to lock them out after Tuesday, and send all their boxes to the public-house.

Poor Cradell! Eames, as he threw himself back upon his seat and contemplated the depth of misfortune into which his friend had fallen, began to be almost in love with his own position. He himself was, no doubt, a very miserable fellow. There was only one thing in life worth living for, and that he could not get. He had been thinking for the last three days of throwing himself before a locomotive steam-engine, and was not quite sure that he would not do it yet; but, nevertheless, his place was a place among the gods as compared to that which poor Cradell had selected for himself. To be not only the husband of Amelia Roper, but to have been driven to take upon himself as his bride's fortune the whole of his future mother-in-law's debts! To find himself the owner of a

very indifferent lodging-house;—the owner as regarded all responsibility, though not the owner as regarded any possible profit! And then, above and almost worse than all the rest, to find himself saddled with the Lupexes in the beginning of his career! Poor Cradell indeed!

Eames had not taken his things away from the lodging-house before he left London, and therefore determined to drive to Burton Crescent immediately on his arrival, not with the intention of remaining there, even for a night, but that he might bid them farewell, speak his congratulations to Amelia, and arrange for his final settlement with Mrs. Roper. It should have been explained in the last chapter that the earl had told him before parting with him that his want of success with Lily would make no difference as regarded money. John had, of course, expostulated, saying that he did not want anything, and would not, under his existing circumstances, accept anything; but the earl was a man who knew how to have his own way, and in this matter did have it. Our friend, therefore, was a man of wealth when he returned to London, and could tell Mrs. Roper that he would send her a cheque for her little balance as soon as he reached his office.

He arrived in the middle of the day,—not timing his return at all after the usual manner of Government clerks, who generally manage to reach the metropolis not more than half an hour before the moment at which they are bound to show themselves in their seats. But he had come back two days before he was due, and had run away from the country as though London in May to him were much pleasanter than the woods and fields. But neither had London nor the woods and fields any influence on his return. He had gone down that he might throw himself at the feet of Lily Dale,—gone down, as he now confessed to himself, with hopes almost triumphant, and he had returned because Lily Dale would not have him at her feet. "I loved him,—him, Crosbie,—better than all the world besides. It is still the same. I still love him better than all the world." Those were the words which had driven him back to London; and having been sent away with such words as those, it was little matter to him whether he reached his office a day or two sooner or later. The little room in the city, even with the accompaniment of Sir Raffle's bell and Sir Raffle's voice, would now be more congenial to him than Lady Julia's drawing-room. He would therefore present himself to Sir Raffle on that very afternoon, and expel some interloper from his seat. But he would first call in Burton Crescent and say farewell to the Ropers.

The door was opened for him by the faithful Jemima. "Mr. Heames, Mr. Heames! ho dear, ho dear!" and the poor girl, who had always taken his side in the adventures of the lodging-house, raised her hands on high and lamented the fate which had separated her favourite from its fortunes. "I suppose you knows it all, Mister Johnny?" Mister Johnny said that he believed he did know it all, and asked for the mistress of the house. "Yes, sure enough, she's at home. She don't

dare stir out much, 'cause of them Lupexes. Ain't this a pretty game? No dinner and no nothink! Them boxes is Miss Spruce's. She's agoing now, this minute. You'll find 'em all upstairs in the drawn-room." So upstairs into the drawing-room he went, and there he found the mother and daughter, and with them Miss Spruce, tightly packed up in her bonnet and shawl. "Don't, mother," Amelia was saying; "what's the good of going on in that way? If she chooses to go, let her go."

"But she's been with me now so many years," said Mrs. Roper, sobbing; "and I've always done everything for her! Haven't I, now, Sally Spruce?" It struck Eames immediately that, though he had been an inmate in the house for two years, he had never before heard that maiden lady's Christian name. Miss Spruce was the first to see Eames as he entered the room. It is probable that Mrs. Roper's pathos might have produced some answering pathos on her part had she remained unobserved, but the sight of a young man brought her back to her usual state of quiescence. "I'm only an old woman," said she; "and here's Mr. Eames come back again."

"How d'ye do, Mrs. Roper? how d'ye do, — Amelia? how d'ye do, Miss Spruce?" and he shook hands with them all.

"Oh, laws," said Mrs. Roper, "you have given me such a start!"

"Dear me, Mr. Eames; only think of your coming back in that way," said Amelia.

"Well, what way should I come back? You didn't hear me knock at the door, that's all. So Miss Spruce is really going to leave you?"

"Isn't it dreadful, Mr. Eames? Nineteen years we've been together; —taking both houses together, Miss Spruce, we have, indeed." Miss Spruce at this point struggled very hard to convince John Eames that the period in question had in truth extended over only eighteen years, but Mrs. Roper was authoritative, and would not permit it. "It's nineteen years if it's a day. No one ought to know dates if I don't, and there isn't one in the world understands her ways unless it's me. Haven't I been up to your bedroom every night, and with my own hand given you——" But she stopped herself, and was too good a woman to declare before a young man what had been the nature of her nightly ministrations to her guest.

"I don't think you'll be so comfortable anywhere else, Miss Spruce," said Eames.

"Comfortable! of course she won't," said Amelia. "But if I was mother I wouldn't have any more words about it."

"It isn't the money I'm thinking of, but the feeling of it," said Mrs. Roper. "The house will be so lonely like. I shan't know myself; that I shan't. And now that things are all settled so pleasantly, and that the Lupexes must go on Tuesday—— I'll tell you what, Sally; I'll pay for the cab myself, and I'll start off to Dulwich by the omnibus to-morrow, and settle it all out of my own pocket. I will indeed. Come; there's the cab. Let me go down, and send him away."

"I'll do that," said Eames. "It's only sixpence, off the stand," Mrs. Roper called to him as he left the room. But the cabman got a shilling, and John, as he returned, found Jemima, in the act of carrying Miss Spruce's boxes back to her room. "So much the better for poor Caudle," said he to himself. "As he has gone into the trade it's well that he should have somebody that will pay him."

Mrs. Roper followed Miss Spruce up the stairs and Johnny was left with Amelia. "He's written to you, I know," said she, with her face turned a little away from him. She was certainly very handsome, but there was a hard, cross, almost sullen look about her, which robbed her countenance of all its pleasantness. And yet she had no intention of being sullen with him.

"Yes," said John. "He has told me how it's all going to be."

"Well?" she said.

"Well?" said he.

"Is that all you've got to say?"

"I'll congratulate you, if you'll let me."

"Psha;—congratulations! I hate such humbug. If you've no feelings about it, I'm sure that I've none. Indeed I don't know what's the good of feelings. They never did me any good. Are you engaged to marry L. D.?"

"No; I am not."

"And you've nothing else to say to me?"

"Nothing,—except my hopes for your happiness. What else can I say? You are engaged to marry my friend Cradell, and I think it will be a happy match."

She turned away her face further from him, and the look of it became even more sullen. Could it be possible that at such a moment she still had a hope that he might come back to her?

"Good-by, Amelia," he said, putting out his hand to her.

"And this is to be the last of you in this house?"

"Well, I don't know about that. I'll come and call upon you, if you'll let me, when you're married."

"Yes," she said, "that there may be rows in the house, and noise, and jealousy,—as there have been with that wicked woman upstairs. Not if I know it, you won't! John Eames, I wish I'd never seen you. I wish we might have both fallen dead when we first met. I didn't think ever to have cared for a man as I've cared for you. It's all trash and nonsense and foolery; I know that. It's all very well for young ladies as can sit in drawing-rooms all their lives, but when a woman has her way to make in the world it's all foolery. And such a hard way, too, to make as mine is!"

"But it won't be hard now."

"Won't it? But I think it will. I wish you would try it. Not that I'm going to complain. I never minded work, and as for company, I can put up with anybody. The world's not to be all dancing and fiddling

for the likes of me. I know that well enough. But ——," and then she paused.

"What's the 'but' about, Amelia?"

"It's like you to ask me; isn't it?" To tell the truth he should not have asked her. "Never mind. I'm not going to have any words with you. If you've been a knave I've been a fool, and that's worse."

"But I don't think I have been a knave."

"I've been both," said the girl; "and both for nothing. After that you may go. I've told you what I am, and I'll leave you to name yourself. I didn't think it was in me to have been such a fool. It's that that frets me. Never mind, sir; it's all over now, and I wish you good-by."

I do not think that there was the slightest reason why John should have again kissed her at parting, but he did so. She bore it, not struggling with him; but she took his caress with sullen endurance. "It'll be the last," she said. "Good-by, John Eames."

"Good-by, Amelia. Try to make him a good wife and then you'll be happy." She turned up her nose at this, assuming a look of unutterable scorn. But she said nothing further, and then he left the room. At the parlour door he met Mrs. Roper, and had his parting words with her.

"I am so glad you came," said she. "It was just that word you said that made Miss Spruce stay. Her money is so ready, you know! And so you've had it all out with her about Cradell. She'll make him a good wife, she will indeed;—much better than you've been giving her credit for."

"I don't doubt she'll be a very good wife."

"You see, Mr. Eames, it's all over now, and we understand each other; don't we? It made me very unhappy when she was setting her cap at you; it did indeed. She is my own daughter, and I couldn't go against her;—could I? But I knew it wasn't in any way suiting. Laws, I know the difference. She's good enough for him any day of the week, Mr. Eames."

"That she is,—Saturdays or Sundays," said Johnny, not knowing exactly what he ought to say.

"So she is; and if he does his duty by her she won't go astray in hers by him. And as for you, Mr. Eames, I'm sure I've always felt it an honour and a pleasure to have you in the house; and if ever you could use a good word in sending to me any of your young men, I'd do by them as a mother should; I would indeed. I know I've been to blame about those Lupexes, but haven't I suffered for it, Mr. Eames? And it was difficult to know at first; wasn't it? And as to you and Amelia, if you would send any of your young men to try, there couldn't be anything more of that kind, could there? I know it hasn't all been just as it should have been;—that is as regards you; but I should like to hear you say that you've found me honest before you went. I have tried to be honest, I have indeed."

Eames assured her that he was convinced of her honesty, and that he

had never thought of impugning her character either in regard to those unfortunate people, the Lupexes, or in reference to other matters. "He did not think," he said, "that any young men would consult him as to their lodgings; but if he could be of any service to her, he would." Then he bade her good-by, and having bestowed half-a-sovereign on the faithful Jemima, he took a long farewell of Burton Crescent. Amelia had told him not to come and see her when she should be married, and he had resolved that he would take her at her word. So he walked off from the Crescent, not exactly shaking the dust from his feet, but resolving that he would know no more either of its dust or of its dirt. Dirt enough he had encountered there certainly, and he was now old enough to feel that the inmates of Mrs. Roper's house had not been those among whom a resting-place for his early years should judiciously have been sought. But he had come out of the fire comparatively unharmed, and I regret to say that he felt but little for the terrible scorplings to which his friend had been subjected and was about to subject himself. He was quite content to look at the matter exactly as it was looked at by Mrs. Roper. Amelia was good enough for Joseph Cradell—any day of the week. Poor Cradell, of whom in these pages after this notice no more will be heard! I cannot but think that a hard measure of justice was meted out to him, in proportion to the extent of his sins. More weak and foolish than our friend and hero he had been, but not to my knowledge more wicked. But it is to the vain and foolish that the punishments fall;—and to them they fall so thickly and constantly that the thinker is driven to think that vanity and folly are of all sins those which may be the least forgiven. As for Cradell I may declare that he did marry Amelia, that he did, with some pride, take the place of master of the house at the bottom of Mrs. Roper's table, and that he did make himself responsible for all Mrs. Roper's debts. Of his future fortunes there is not space to speak in these pages.

Going away from the Crescent, Eames had himself driven to his office, which he reached just as the men were leaving it, at four o'clock. Cradell was gone, so that he did not see him on that afternoon; but he had an opportunity of shaking hands with Mr. Love, who treated him with all the smiling courtesy due to an official big-wig,—for a private secretary, if not absolutely a big-wig, is semi-big, and entitled to a certain amount of reverence;—and he passed Mr. Kissing in the passage, hurrying along as usual with a huge book under his arm. Mr. Kissing, hurried as he was, stopped his shuffling feet; but Eames only looked at him, hardly honouring him with the acknowledgment of a nod of his head. Mr. Kissing, however, was not offended; he knew that the private secretary of the First Commissioner had been the guest of an earl; and what more than a nod could be expected from him? After that John made his way into the august presence of Sir Raffle, and found that great man putting on his shoes in the presence of FitzHoward. FitzHoward blushed; but the shoes had not been touched by him, as he took occasion afterwards to inform John Eames.

Sir Raffle was all smiles and civility. "Delighted to see you back, Eames: am, upon my word; though I and FitzHoward have got on capitally in your absence; haven't we, FitzHoward?"

"Oh, yes," drawled FitzHoward. "I haven't minded it for a time, just while Eames has been away."

"You're much too idle to keep at it, I know; but your bread will be buttered for you elsewhere, so it doesn't signify. My compliments to the duchess when you see her." Then FitzHoward went. "And how's my dear old friend?" asked Sir Raffle, as though of all men living Lord De Guest were the one for whom he had the strongest and the oldest love. And yet he must have known that John Eames knew as much about it as he did himself. But there are men who have the most lively gratification in calling lords and marquises their friends, though they know that nobody believes a word of what they say,—even though they know how great is the odium they incur, and how lasting is the ridicule which their vanity produces. It is a gentle insanity which prevails in the outer courts of every aristocracy; and as it brings with itself considerable annoyance and but a lukewarm pleasure, it should not be treated with too keen a severity.

"And how's my dear old friend?" Eames assured him that his dear old friend was all right, that Lady Julia was all right, that the dear old place was all right. Sir Raffle now spoke as though the "dear old place" were quite well known to him. "Was the game doing pretty well? Was there a promise of birds?" Sir Raffle's anxiety was quite intense, and expressed with almost familiar affection. "And, by-the-by, Eames, where are you living at present?"

"Well, I'm not settled. I'm at the Great Western Railway Hotel at this moment."

"Capital house, very; only it's expensive if you stay there the whole season." Johnny had no idea of remaining there beyond one night, but he said nothing as to this. "By-the-by, you might as well come and dine with us to-morrow. Lady Buffle is most anxious to know you. There'll be one or two with us. I did ask my friend Dumbello, but there's some nonsense going on in the House, and he thinks that he can't get away." Johnny was more gracious than Lord Dumbello, and accepted the invitation. "I wonder what Lady Buffle will be like?" he said to himself, as he walked away from the office.

He had turned into the Great Western Hotel, not as yet knowing where to look for a home; and there we will leave him, eating his solitary mutton-chop at one of those tables which are so comfortable to the eye, but which are so comfortless in reality. I speak not now with reference to the excellent establishment which has been named, but to the nature of such tables in general. A solitary mutton-chop in an hotel coffee-room is not a banquet to be envied by any god; and if the mutton-chop be converted into soup, fish, little dishes, big dishes, and the rest, the matter becomes worse and not better. What comfort are you to have, seated

alone on that horsehair chair, staring into the room and watching the waiters as they whisk about their towels? No one but an Englishman has ever yet thought of subjecting himself to such a position as that! But here we will leave John Eames, and in doing so I must be allowed to declare that only now, at this moment, has he entered on his manhood. Hitherto he has been a hobbledehoy,—a calf, as it were, who had carried his calfiness later into life than is common with calves; but who did not, perhaps, on that account, give promise of making a worse ox than the rest of them. His life hitherto, as recorded in these pages, had afforded him no brilliant success,—had hardly qualified him for the rôle of hero which he has been made to play. I feel that I have been in fault in giving such prominence to a hobbledehoy, and that I should have told my story better had I brought Mr. Crosbie more conspicuously forward on my canvas. He at any rate has gotten to himself a wife,—as a hero always should do; whereas I must leave my poor friend Johnny without any matrimonial prospects.

It was thus that he thought of himself as he sat moping over his solitary table in the hotel coffee-room. He acknowledged to himself that he had not hitherto been a man; but at the same time he made some resolution which, I trust, may assist him in commencing his manhood from this date.

CHAPTER LX.

CONCLUSION.

It was early in June that Lily went up to her uncle at the Great House, pleading for Hopkins,—pleading that to Hopkins might be restored all the privileges of head gardener at the Great House. There was some absurdity in this, seeing that he had never really relinquished his privileges; but the manner of the quarrel had been in this wise.

There was in those days, and had been for years, a vexed question between Hopkins and Jolliffe the bailiff on the matter of — stable manure. Hopkins had pretended to the right of taking what he required from the farmyard, without asking leave of any one. Jolliffe in return had hinted, that if this were so, Hopkins would take it all. "But I can't eat it," Hopkins had said. Jolliffe merely grunted, signifying by the grunt, as Hopkins thought, that though a gardener couldn't eat a mountain of manure fifty feet long, and fifteen high,—couldn't eat it in the body,—he might convert it into things edible for his own personal use. And so there had been a great feud. The unfortunate squire had of course been called on to arbitrate, and, having postponed his decision by every contrivance possible to him, had at last been driven by Jolliffe to declare that Hopkins should take nothing that was not assigned to him. Hopkins,

when the decision was made known to him by his master, bit his old lips, and turned round upon his old heel, speechless. "You'll find it's so at all other places," said the squire, apologetically. "Other places!" sneered Hopkins. Where would he find other gardeners like himself? It is hardly necessary to declare that from that moment he resolved that he would abide by no such order. Jolliffe on the next morning informed the squire that the order had been broken, and the squire fretted and fumed, wishing that Jolliffe were well buried under the mountain in question. "If they all is to do as they like," said Jolliffe, "then nobody won't care for nobody." The squire understood that an order if given must be obeyed, and therefore, with many inner groanings of the spirit, resolved that war must be waged against Hopkins.

On the following morning he found the old man himself wheeling a huge barrow of manure round from the yard into the kitchen garden. Now, on ordinary occasions, Hopkins was not required to do with his own hands work of that description. He had a man under him who hewed wood and carried water and wheeled barrows,—one man always, and often two. The squire knew when he saw him that he was sinning, and bade him stop upon his road.

"Hopkins," he said, "why didn't you ask for what you wanted, before you took it?" The old man put down the barrow on the ground, looked up in his master's face, spat into his hands, and then again resumed his barrow. "Hopkins, that won't do," said the squire. "Stop where you are."

"What won't do?" said Hopkins, still holding the barrow from the ground, but not as yet progressing.

"Put it down, Hopkins," and Hopkins did put it down. "Don't you know that you are flatly disobeying my orders?"

"Squire, I've been here about this place going on nigh seventy years."

"If you've been going on a hundred and seventy it wouldn't do that there should be more than one master. I'm the master here, and I intend to be so to the end. Take that manure back into the yard."

"Back into the yard?" said Hopkins, very slowly.

"Yes; back into the yard."

"What,—afore all their faces?"

"Yes; you've disobeyed me before all their faces."

Hopkins paused a moment, looking away from the squire, and shaking his head as though he had need of deep thought, but by the aid of deep thought had come at last to a right conclusion. Then he resumed the barrow, and putting himself almost into a trot, carried away his prize into the kitchen garden. At the pace which he went it would have been beyond the squire's power to stop him, nor would Mr. Dale have wished to come to a personal encounter with his servant. But he called after the man in dire wrath that if he were not obeyed the disobedient servant should rue the consequences for ever. Hopkins, equal to the occasion, shook his head as he trotted on, deposited his load at the foot of the cucumber frames,

and then at once returning to his master, tendered to him the key of the greenhouse.

"Master," said Hopkins, speaking as best he could with his scanty breath, "there it is;—there's the key; of course I don't want no warning, and doesn't care about my week's wages. I'll be out of the cottage afore night, and as for the work'us, I suppose they'll let me in at once, if your honour'll give 'em a line."

Now as Hopkins was well known by the squire to be the owner of three or four hundred pounds, the hint about the workhouse must be allowed to have been melo-dramatic.

"Don't be a fool," said the squire, almost gnashing his teeth.

"I know I've been a fool," said Hopkins, "about that 'ere doong; my feelings has been too much for me. When a man's feelings has been too much for him, he'd better just take hisself off, and lie in the work'us till he dies." And then he again tendered the key. But the squire did not take the key, and so Hopkins went on. "I s'pose I'd better just see to the lights and the like of that, till you've suited yourself, Mr. Dale. It 'ud be a pity all them grapes should go off, and they, as you may say, all one as fit for the table. It's a long way the best crop I ever see on 'em. I've been that careful with 'em that I haven't had a natural night's rest, nor since February. There ain't nobody about this place as understands grapes, nor yet anywhere nigh that could be got at. My lord's head man is verry ignorant; but even if he knew ever so, of course he couldn't come here. I suppose I'd better keep the key till you're suited, Mr. Dale."

Then for a fortnight there was an interregnum in the gardens, terrible in the annals of Allington. Hopkins lived in his cottage indeed, and looked most sedulously after the grapes. In looking after the grapes, too, he took the greenhouses under his care; but he would have nothing to do with the outer gardens, took no wages, returning the amount sent to him back to the squire, and insisted with everybody that he had been dismissed. He went about with some terrible horticultural implement always in his hand, with which it was said that he intended to attack Jolliffe; but Jolliffe prudently kept out of his way.

As soon as it had been resolved by Mrs. Dale and Lily that the fitting from the Small House at Allington was not to be accomplished, Lily communicated the fact to Hopkins.

"Miss," said he, "when I said them few words to you and your mamma, I knew that you would listen to reason."

This was no more than Lily had expected; that Hopkins should claim the honour of having prevailed by his arguments was a matter of course.

"Yes," said Lily; "we've made up our minds to stay. Uncle wishes it."

"Wishes it! Laws, miss;—it ain't only wishes. And we all wishes it. Why, now, look at the reason of the thing. Here's this here house——"

"But, Hopkins, it's decided. We're going to stay. What I want to know is this; can you come at once and help me to unpack?"

"What! this very evening, as is——"

"Yes, now; we want to have the things about again before they come back from Guestwick."

Hopkins scratched his head and hesitated, not wishing to yield to any proposition that could be considered as childish; but he gave way at last, feeling that the work itself was a good work. Mrs. Dale also assented, laughing at Lily for her folly as she did so, and in this way the things were unpacked very quickly, and the alliance between Lily and Hopkins became, for the time, very close. This work of unpacking and resettling was not yet over, when the battle of the manure broke out, and therefore it was that Hopkins, when his feelings had become altogether too much for him "about the doong," came at last to Lily, and laying down at her feet all the weight and all the glory of his sixty odd years of life, implored her to make matters straight for him. "It's been a killing me, miss, so it has; to see the way they've been a cutting that sparagus. It ain't cutting at all. It's just hocking it up;—what is fit, and what isn't, altogether. And they've been a putting the plants in where I didn't mean 'em, though they know'd I didn't mean 'em. I've stood by, miss, and said never a word. I'd a died sooner. But, Miss Lily, what my sufferings have been, 'cause of my feelings getting the better of me about that—you know, miss—nobody will ever tell;—nobody—nobody—nobody." Then Hopkins turned away and wept.

"Uncle," said Lily, creeping close up against his chair, "I want to ask you a great favour."

"A great favour. Well, I don't think I shall refuse you anything at present. It isn't to ask another earl to the house,—is it?"

"Another earl!" said Lily.

"Yes; haven't you heard? Miss Bell has been here this morning, insisting that I should have over Lord De Guest and his sister for the marriage. It seems that there was some scheming between Bell and Lady Julia."

"Of course you'll ask them."

"Of course I must. I've no way out of it. It'll be all very well for Bell, who'll be off to Wales with her lover; but what am I to do with the earl and Lady Julia, when they're gone? Will you come and help me?"

In answer to this, Lily of course promised that she would come and help. "Indeed," said she, "I thought we were all asked up for the day. And now for my favour. Uncle, you must forgive poor Hopkins."

"Forgive a fiddlestick!" said the squire.

"No, but you must. You can't think how unhappy he is."

"How can I forgive a man who won't forgive me. He goes prowling about the place doing nothing; and he sends me back his wages, and he looks as though he were going to murder some one; and all because he wouldn't do as he was told. How am I to forgive such a man as that?"

"But, uncle, why not?"

"It would be his forgiving me. He knows very well that he may come back whenever he pleases; and, indeed, for the matter of that he has never gone away."

"But he is so very unhappy."

"What can I do to make him happier?"

"Just go down to his cottage and tell him that you forgive him."

"Then he'll argue with me."

"No; I don't think he will. He is too much down in the world for arguing now."

"Ah! you don't know him as I do. All the misfortunes in the world wouldn't stop that man's conceit. Of course I'll go if you ask me, but it seems to me that I'm made to knock under to everybody. I hear a great deal about other people's feelings, but I don't know that mine are very much thought of." He was not altogether in a happy mood, and Lily almost regretted that she had persevered; but she did succeed in carrying him off across the garden to the cottage, and as they went together she promised him that she would think of him always,—always. The scene with Hopkins cannot be described now, as it would take too many of our few remaining pages. It resulted, I am afraid I must confess, in nothing more triumphant to the squire than a treaty of mutual forgiveness. Hopkins acknowledged with much self-reproach that his feelings had been too many for him; but then, look at his provocation! He could not keep his tongue from that matter, and certainly said as much in his own defence as he did in confession of his sins. The substantial triumph was altogether his, for nobody again ever dared to interfere with his operations in the farmyard. He showed his submission to his master mainly by consenting to receive his wages for the two weeks which he had passed in idleness.

Owing to this little accident, Lily was not so much oppressed by Hopkins as she had expected to be in that matter of their altered plans; but this salvation did not extend to Mrs. Hearn, to Mrs. Crump, or, above all, to Mrs. Boyce. They, all of them, took an interest more or less strong in the Hopkins controversy; but their interest in the occupation of the Small House was much stronger, and it was found useless to put Mrs. Hearn off with the gardener's persistent refusal of his wages, when she was big with inquiry whether the house was to be painted inside, as well as out. "Ah," said she, "I think I'll go and look at lodgings at Guestwick myself, and pack up some of my beds." Lily made no answer to this, feeling that it was a part of that punishment which she had expected. "Dear, dear," said Mrs. Crump to the two girls; "well, to be sure, we should a been lone without 'ee, and mayhap we might a got worse in your place; but why did 'ee go and fasten up all your things in them big boxes, just to unfasten 'em all again?"

"We changed our minds, Mrs. Crump," said Bell, with some severity.

"Yees, I know ye changed your mindses. Well, it's all right for the loiks o' ye, no doubt; but if we changes our mindses, we hears of it."

"So, it seems, do we!" said Lily. "But never mind, Mrs. Crump. Do you send us our letters up early, and then we won't quarrel."

"Oh, letters! Drat them for letters. I wish there weren't no sich things. There was a man here yesterday with his imperence. I don't know where he come from,—down from Lun'on, I b'leeve; and this was wrong, and that was wrong, and everything was wrong; and then he said he'd have me discharged the sarvice."

"Dear me, Mrs. Crump; that wouldn't do at all."

"Discharged the sarvice! Tuppence farden a day! So I told 'un to discharge hisself, and take all the old bundles and things away upon his shoulders. Letters, indeed! What business have they with post-misuses, if they cannot pay 'em better nor tuppence farden a day?" And in this way, under the shelter of Mrs. Crump's storm of wrath against the inspector who had visited her, Lily and Bell escaped much that would have fallen upon their own heads; but Mrs. Boyce still remained. I may here add, in order that Mrs. Crump's history may be carried on to the farthest possible point, that she was not "discharged the sarvice," and that she still receives her twopence farthing a day from the Crown. "That's a bitter old lady," said the inspector to the man who was driving him. "Yes, sir; they all says the same about she. There ain't none of 'em get much change out of Mrs. Crump."

Bell and Lily went together also to Mrs. Boyce's. "If she makes herself very disagreeable, I shall insist upon talking of your marriage," said Lily.

"I've not the slightest objection," said Bell; "only I don't know what there can be to say about it. Marrying the doctor is such a very commonplace sort of thing."

"Not a bit more commonplace than marrying the parson," said Lily.

"Oh, yes, it is. Parsons' marriages are often very grand affairs. They come in among county people. That's their luck in life. Doctors never do; nor lawyers. I don't think lawyers ever get married in the country. They're supposed to do it up in London. But a country doctor's wedding is not a thing to be talked about much."

Mrs. Boyce probably agreed in this view of the matter, seeing that she did not choose the coming marriage as her first subject of conversation. As soon as the two girls were seated she flew away immediately to the house, and began to express her very great surprise,—her surprise and her joy also,—at the sudden change which had been made in their plans. "It is so much nicer, you know," said she, "that things should be pleasant among relatives."

"Things always have been tolerably pleasant with us," said Bell.

"Oh, yes; I'm sure of that. I've always said it was quite a pleasure to see you and your uncle together. And when we heard about your all having to leave——"

"But we didn't have to leave, Mrs. Boyce. We were going to leave because we thought mamma would be more comfortable in Guestwick; and now we're not going to leave, because we've all 'changed our mindses,' as Mrs. Crump calls it."

"And is it true the house is going to be painted?" asked Mrs. Boyce.

"I believe it is true," said Lily.

"Inside and out?"

"It must be done some day," said Bell.

"Yes, to be sure; but I must say it is generous of the squire. There's such a deal of wood-work about your house. I know I wish the ecclesiastical commissioners would paint ours; but nobody ever does anything for the clergy. I'm sure I'm delighted you're going to stay. As I said to Mr. Boyce, what should we ever have done without you? I believe the squire had made up his mind that he would not let the place."

"I don't think he ever has let it."

"And if there was nobody in it, it would all go to rack and ruin, wouldn't it? Had your mamma to pay anything for the lodgings she engaged at Guestwick?"

"Upon my word, I don't know. Bell can tell you better about that than I, as Dr. Crofts settled it. I suppose Dr. Crofts tells her everything." And so the conversation was changed, and Mrs. Boyce was made to understand that whatever further mystery there might be, it would not be unravelled on that occasion.

It was settled that Dr. Crofts and Bell should be married about the middle of June, and the squire determined to give what grace he could to the ceremony by opening his own house on the occasion. Lord De Guest and Lady Julia were invited by special arrangement between her ladyship and Bell, as has been before explained. The colonel also with Lady Fanny came up from Torquay on the occasion, this being the first visit made by the colonel to his paternal roof for many years. Bernard did not accompany his father. He had not yet gone abroad, but there were circumstances which made him feel that he would not find himself comfortable at the wedding. The service was performed by Mr. Boyce, assisted, as the *County Chronicle* very fully remarked, by the Reverend John Joseph Jones, M.A., late of Jesus College, Cambridge, and curate of St. Peter's, Northgate, Guestwick; the fault of which little advertisement was this,—that as none of the readers of the paper had patience to get beyond the Reverend John Joseph Jones, the fact of Bell's marriage with Dr. Crofts was not disseminated as widely as might have been wished.

The marriage went off very nicely. The squire was upon his very best behaviour, and welcomed his guests as though he really enjoyed their presence there in his halls. Hopkins, who was quite aware that he had been triumphant, decorated the old rooms with mingled flowers and greenery with an assiduous care which pleased the two girls mightily. And during this work of wreathing and decking there was one little morsel of feeling displayed which may as well be told in these last lines.

Lily had been encouraging the old man while Bell for a moment had been absent.

"I wish it had been for thee, my darling!" he said; "I wish it had been for thee!"

"It is much better as it is, Hopkins," she answered, solemnly.

"Not with him, though," he went on, "not with him. I wouldn't a hung a bough for him. But with t'other one."

Lily said no word further. She knew that the man was expressing the wishes of all around her. She said no word further, and then Bell returned to them.

But no one at the wedding was so gay as Lily,—so gay, so bright, and so wedding-like. She flirted with the old earl till he declared that he would marry her himself. No one seeing her that evening, and knowing nothing of her immediate history, would have imagined that she herself had been cruelly jilted some six or eight months ago. And those who did know her could not imagine that what she then suffered had hit her so hard, that no recovery seemed possible for her,—though she was as a man whose right arm had been taken from him in the battle, still all the world had not gone with that right arm. The bullet which had maimed her sorely had not touched her life, and she scorned to go about the world complaining either by word or look of the injury she had received. "Wives when they have lost their husbands still eat and laugh," she said to herself, "and he is not dead like that." So she resolved that she would be happy, and I here declare that she not only seemed to carry out her resolution, but that she did carry it out in very truth. "You're a dear good man, and I know you'll be good to her," she said to Crofts just as he was about to start with his bride.

"I'll try, at any rate," he answered.

"And I shall expect you to be good to me, too. Remember you have married the whole family; and, sir, you mustn't believe a word of what that bad man says in his novels about mothers-in-law. He has done a great deal of harm, and shut half the ladies in England out of their daughters' houses."

"He shan't shut Mrs. Dale out of mine."

"Remember he doesn't. Now, good-by." So the bride and bridegroom went off, and Lily was left to flirt with Lord De Guest.

Of whom else is it necessary that a word or two should be said before I allow the weary pen to fall from my hand? The squire, after much inward struggling on the subject, had acknowledged to himself that his sister-in-law had not received from him that kindness which she had deserved. He had acknowledged this, purporting to do his best to amend his past errors; and I think I may say that his efforts in that line would not be received ungraciously by Mrs. Dale. I am inclined therefore to think that life at Allington, both at the Great House and at the Small, would soon become pleasanter than it used to be in former days. Lily

soon got the Balmoral boots, or, at least, soon learned that the power of getting them as she pleased had devolved upon her from her uncle's gift; so that she talked even of buying the squirrel's cage; but I am not aware that her extravagance led her as far as that.

Lord De Courcy we left suffering dreadfully from gout and ill-temper at Courcy Castle. Yes, indeed! To him in his latter days life did not seem to offer much that was comfortable. His wife had now gone from him, and declared positively to her son-in-law that no earthly consideration should ever induce her to go back again;—"not if I were to starve!" she said. By which she intended to signify that she would be firm in her resolve, even though she should thereby lose her carriage and horses. Poor Mr. Gazebee went down to Courcy, and had a dreadful interview with the earl; but matters were at last arranged, and her ladyship remained at Baden-Baden in a state of semi-starvation. That is to say, she had but one horse to her carriage.

As regards Crosbie, I am inclined to believe that he did again recover his power at his office. He was Mr. Butterwell's master, and the master also of Mr. Optimist, and the major. He knew his business, and could do it, which was more, perhaps, than might fairly be said of any of the other three. Under such circumstances he was sure to get in his hand, and lead again. But elsewhere his star did not recover its ascendancy. He dined at his club almost daily, and there were those with whom he habitually formed some little circle. But he was not the Crosbie of former days,—the Crosbie known in Belgravia and in St. James's Street. He had taken his little vessel bravely out into the deep waters, and had sailed her well while fortune stuck close to him. But he had forgotten his nautical rules, and success had made him idle. His plummet and lead had not been used, and he had kept no look-out ahead. Therefore the first rock he met shivered his bark to pieces. His wife, the Lady Alexandrina, is to be seen in the one-horse carriage with her mother at Baden-Baden.

A Day with the Emperor's Hounds.



HERE is probably no human being more dogmatical than your thorough British sportsman. He firmly believes that but one correct and orthodox system of dealing with the *feræ natura* exists, and that that is the traditional system which has been practised time out of mind by his own countrymen. He cannot persuade himself that "Frenchmen"—in which comprehensive denomination he conveniently includes all mankind who are not British subjects—can either ride, shoot, hunt, or fish, save after the abortive and unsatisfactory methods peculiar to "tailors" and "muffs." A "foreigner's" account of a day's sport of any kind convulses him with contemptuous laughter,

for he at once detects in it a thousand unimportant flaws and blemishes which confirm him in his creed, that "Frenchmen" are pre-ordained by nature to be, and to remain, ignorant all their lives of everything which a thorough British sportsman ought instinctively to know. "How, indeed," will he ask, "is it possible to listen gravely to a fellow who talks of 'a covey' of snipe, 'a couple' of partridges, or 'the tail' of a fox?"

I confess that I am not without serious misgivings that this intolerant spirit may not be confined to British sportsmen, but that it may equally prevail amongst the sportsmen of other nations; that American backwoodsmen may very possibly hold the solemn English swells who write pretentious books about buffalo hunting quite as cheap as we hold "foreigners" in general, in all matters pertaining to English wood-craft; and that a Gaucho rough-rider may, on his own ground, justly consider himself a better man across country than the best of our Leicestershire chivalry, if, indeed, the Gaucho has ever heard of the existence of those gentlemen.

It is, therefore, with some diffidence that I proceed, at the instigation of my friends, Messrs. Smith and Elder, to jot down on paper my recollections of a day's stag hunting, which it was once my good fortune to see with the French Emperor's hounds in the forest of Compiègne. I must premise by stating that I know nothing of the noble science of venery as practised by the high school of French sportsmen; that I knew next to

nothing of the localities in which the hunt I am about to describe took place, and that I knew scarcely any of the sportsmen or women who were present at it, even by sight. I fear, therefore, that this paper may appear as entirely and hopelessly absurd in the eyes of the members of the Imperial Hunt as would, to the readers of *Bell's Life* or the *Field*, a narrative by one of Mr. Leech's most egregious hunting "mossoos" of "a clipping thing with the Queen's," from Ivor Heath or Salt Hill.

Stag hunting, as practised in the immediate neighbourhood of London, cannot, I imagine, be considered, even by its most enthusiastic votaries, as a very elevated branch of the wild sports of Middlesex. You do not, indeed, hunt a wild animal at all; you hunt a wretched tame brute, kept up in a stable, fed upon the best of beans, oats, and old hay, and chased round a paddock daily for the improvement of its wind and condition. You convey it to the place of execution in a van drawn by post-horses; you flavour it highly with aniseed in order to solve all doubts and difficulties as to scent; as the clock strikes eleven you "enlarge" it, and "chivy" it furiously for half a mile with horsewhips and execrations "to give it a start," and you then lay on your hounds.

As the poor beast generally prefers running along the roads,—if the weather is dry and the roads hard,—its feet soon give way and it is easily taken; but if the roads chance to be soft, or if it betakes itself, as it sometimes will, to the ploughed lands, the chase is longer, and usually ends in some pond or stream, into which the hot and wearied deer rushes when it is utterly blown. Occasionally, the hounds maul and mangle it so badly before the huntsmen can ride up to save it, that it has to be killed then and there, for, as its horns are sawn off, it has no means of defending itself; oftener, however, it is secured by the aid of hunting whips and ropes, and is hauled into the nearest barn or coach-house, where it remains a prisoner until its van arrives to convey it home again. A few weeks' nursing qualifies it to appear in public once more, and so its miserable life passes away, until some sad day its feet are entirely destroyed by the Macadam, or the hounds, distancing the huntsmen, tear it to pieces. Between the fate of a badger, kept in a box to be "drawn," and that of a deer kept in a paddock to be hunted, there is, in fact, very little to choose.

I have prefixed this bald sketch of our method of hunting the tame deer in Middlesex to the present paper in order to bespeak from my English readers some indulgence—if they discover during the course of my narrative that the sportsmen of France, in finding, hunting, and killing the wild stag in its native forest, do not carry on their operations precisely in the same way as Mr. Davis, the Queen's huntsman, does. *Tot homines quot sententiæ.* There is, doubtless, a good deal to be said in favour of both systems; yet I am convinced that, were I a stag, I should approve of neither, and should denounce them as equally cruel and unfair.

On a fine sharp November morning, in the year 1862, I left Paris by the Northern Railway at 9 A.M., having sent on my horses the day before

to the *Hotel de la Cloche*, at Compiègne, in order to have a day with the Emperor's hounds. I knew nobody connected with the Court, nor did I even know whether I had any business, as a stranger, to join the Imperial Hunt at all. Nevertheless, I had heard so much of the beauty of the forest, and the splendour of the pageant, that I determined to take my chance as to the reception which an uninvited and unknown stranger would receive from the *Grand Veneur*.

The journey to Compiègne was accomplished in about an hour and a half. In the carriage with me were several gentlemen wearing the livery of the Hunt—a very neat and becoming dress. It consists of a small tricorne hat, a loose dark green cutaway coat, and a red waistcoat, all richly bound and braided with gold, white leather breeches, Napoleon boots, and a *couteau de chasse*. An omnibus conveyed us across the river Oise and up the steep streets of the town to the *Hotel de la Cloche*, where we found breakfast prepared for us. The inn stables were crowded with grooms and hunters awaiting their masters from Paris, and two or three very light open carriages, kept for the purpose, drawn by white post-horses, were ready to convey to the meet several other parties, who, like myself, had come to see the show. One of the first persons I stumbled across was a stableman I recollected to have seen in the service of Mr. Z., the well-known London horse-dealer. I asked him what he was doing at Compiègne. "Brought over a couple of hesses, sir, for Miss —, to sell to the Emperor;" and, sure enough, there was that accomplished little heart- and horse- breaker attired in one of Poole's neatest riding-habits, standing smiling at my elbow, booted and spurred, and eager for the fray.

As soon as I could find my servant and horses, I mounted, and rode slowly on towards the meet. The forest commences the moment you leave the town. It covers 30,000 acres of ground, contains several large pieces of water, and is bounded on its western side by the Oise. Its soil appeared to me to be green sand upon clay; it rode quite as clean and sound as the Nottinghamshire dukeries ride, and it grows finer oaks than either Clumber Welbeck or Worksop can boast. It is pierced in all directions by no less than 1100 *kilomètres* of wide, well-kept rides; and, at intervals of about two miles, are open spaces called *carrefours de chasse*, about as big as Berkeley Square, from each of which these rides diverge in eight different directions. Innumerable guide-posts direct the stranger through what would be a hopeless labyrinth without them.

The meet on the occasion of which I am writing was the *Carrefour du Puits du Roi*, six miles from Compiègne.

On entering the forest I overtook the hounds, upwards of thirty couples of large, strong, and rather coarse dogs. They were attended by four *valets de chiens*, on foot, and by two *piqueurs*, riding handsome English horses. These servants were dressed in the Imperial livery, and carried around them French horns, the footmen wearing long white stockings gartered with black garters below their knees, and high-low

shoes; with their tricorn hats they looked very much like Knaves of Spades. They were short, sturdy fellows, and during the day they had plenty of opportunities of showing that they knew their craft right well, and were gifted with wonderful speed and bottom. A portion of the hounds had soft white cords coiled round their necks, raising in the minds of the uninitiated doubts whether they were going to hunt or going to be hanged. But it was explained to me, that it is the custom with French stag hunters to station in various parts of the forest *relais*, consisting of two or three couples of hounds, in charge of a *valet*, in order that they may be *lancés* on the stag if he happens to come near them, and that these cords were required to lead the *relais* to their posts, and to restrain them till the moment arrived for slipping them.

In company with the hounds we jogged on, passing alternately under lofty timber and by low copse, along firm sandy rides until we reached the *Carréfour du Puits du Roi*. We there found eight *gens-d'armes* in full uniform, mounted on tall bay Norman horses, one being posted at each of the eight entrances to the *carréfour*. At two or three small stalls women were selling coffee, brandy, bread, and roasted chestnuts; a large wood fire was blazing and crackling away merrily, sending its tall column of grey smoke up amongst the trees by which our place of *rendezvous* was overshadowed, and half-a-dozen light carriages filled with ladies were drawn up on the edge of the wood, so as to leave the space within the *carréfour* quite free. The hounds grouped themselves on the green sward around the Knaves of Spades who had them in charge; and we all betook ourselves to drinking coffee and burning *gloria*, and munching bread and chestnuts, and smoking—and waited.

Presently we espied, far away down one of the green rides, a troop of horsemen slowly approaching. As it closed up, we discovered it to consist of fifty prime English hunters, covered with green and gold clothing, marked with the Imperial crown and *chiffre*, and ridden and led by twenty-five neat grooms in the Imperial liveries. Five or six of the horses bore ladies' saddles. This cavalcade entered the *carréfour* and drew up in line on the side opposite to that on which the hounds were rolling, gambolling, and fighting. Then there was another very long pause, only broken by the occasional arrival of a *calèche* and posters, or of a gentleman in the livery of the Hunt. At last a prodigious cracking of whips and jingling of bells announced that the *cortège* from the Castle was at hand. And exactly at 1 P.M. ten *chars à banc* dashed into the *carréfour*, preceded by the *Grand Veneur* on horseback. Each *char à banc* carried twelve persons, sitting, three abreast, on four seats, and was drawn by six horses and attended by two mounted *piqueurs*. The horses were all bay Percheron mares about 15.3 in height, handsome, round, and strong, and very fast trotters; their manes were plaited, their tails clubbed, their rope traces preposterously long, their small neat heads abundantly garnished with bells and badger fur. The postilions and *piqueurs* all wore round glazed hats, powder, pigtails, green and gold

jackets, and red waistcoats, leather breeches, and heavy jack-boots, after the fashion of the olden time, and wielded their whips with deafening dexterity.

The Emperor did not hunt on this occasion, having to attend a Council of State. But in the front seat of the first *char à banc* sat the Empress and the Princess Anna Murat, with a gentleman whose name I could not learn. These two ladies also wore the livery of the Hunt, less—of course—the breeches, boots, and *couteaux de chasse*, the Empress's tricorn having the distinctive ornament of a white ostrich feather coiled around its crown. Amongst the company in the *chars à banc* I recognized a couple of English dukes, and some half dozen other English personages of note. Horses were provided for everybody who chose to ride, and several of the English visitors availed themselves of the Emperor's liberality in this respect, but the greater portion of the party from the Castle appeared to prefer following the hunt on wheels.

As soon as the Empress and Princess Murat had mounted, the *Grand Veneur* informed her Majesty that two stags had been rounded up in the early morning by the keepers and their *limiers*, and were known to be within a short distance of the meet. The Empress at once indicated the direction in which she preferred that the sport should commence, and cantered off with her party, followed by about forty gentlemen wearing the livery of the Hunt, the Imperial *chars à banc*, a few officers in uniform belonging to the *Chasseurs d'Afrique* in garrison at Compiègne, a good many *gens d'armes* who perform the police of the forest, and a perfect cloud of *piqueurs* and grooms. I and a little niece of mine, who had accompanied me on her pony, were the only two "civilians" present on horseback, save and except the pretty little horse-dealing horsebreaker; and the very strong doubts which I entertained whether we might not be looked upon as intruders induced me to keep aloof from the Imperial party, and to ride within the margin of the forest.

On reaching the next *carrefour*, we learned that the stag, disturbed by the noise of the approaching throng, was already afoot, and had just crossed it. A sort of semicircle was therefore formed, of which the Empress was the centre, and the hounds were brought by their *valets* to be laid on the scent. Before this ceremony took place, my little niece said to me, "I am sure that the Empress is looking at us. See, she is sending that gentleman to tell us to go away," and, sure enough, at that very moment an *aide-de-camp*, who had been speaking to her Majesty, hat in hand, suddenly turned his horse round, and galloped straight up to the spot where we were standing. I was preparing to apologize for my intrusion, and to beat a retreat with the best grace I could, when the "Frenchman" courteously addressed us, saying, "The Empress requests that the young English lady on the piebald pony will ride up to her side, where she will see the sport much better than where she is now placed," and accordingly the young English lady, who was but fourteen years old, did canter up to where the Empress of the French

stood, and rode by the side of that kind lady during a great portion of the day. When she is at home, in England, she lives in a midland county, near one of the exiled princes of the House of Orleans, who is as popular with his neighbours as such a courteous, manly, and intelligent gentleman deserves to be; and until her memorable ride in the forest of Compiègne, I am convinced that my little niece May was one of the most devoted adherents the Orleans dynasty had; but such is the frailty and corruption of the female heart, that from that day forward her views on French politics have undergone an entire change. She has, I lament to say, been ever since a rank Imperialist, and I doubt whether even Mr. Kinglake's celebrated fourteenth chapter would succeed in inducing the grateful and proud little girl to think any ill of the terrible Man of December, whose beautiful and gentle wife was so thoughtful and good-natured to her, a child and a stranger, during their pleasant gallop through the forest of Compiègne on that bright November morning. It seems so easy for royalty to win popularity by small courtesies like these, that I often wonder why the attempt is so seldom made. I never saw it made before, and I can answer for it that on this occasion it succeeded perfectly.

As soon as the hounds were away, the sport proceeded as prosperously as woodland hunting on a good scenting day generally does. We galloped up one ride and down another, guided chiefly by the *cors de chasse* of the huntsmen, which made known to the initiated the direction in which the stag was tending. At one time he was declared to be making straight for the *Etangs de St. Pierre*, at another for the *Grands Reservoirs*, and we varied our course accordingly. At last, after running within the forest for upwards of an hour and a half, he broke cover, crossed a strip of cultivated land about a mile in width, and plunged into the Oise, followed by the hounds. In an incredibly short time all the huntsmen, horse and foot, were collected on the bank of the river, encouraging the hounds with their voices and their horns; and they were soon joined by the Empress and her party. The *chars à banc*, which had followed the chase with great spirit and success as long as the stag remained in cover, were here thrown out, not being able to get across the deep ploughed land, and came to a halt in the high road which runs between the forest and the river.

At this moment a curious little episode in the day's sport occurred. A light *calèche* drove noisily up, drawn by four of the Imperial horses, and out of it two ladies handed the *Prince Imperial*, a sturdy comely boy of seven years old, with chubby cheeks and crisp curling black hair. He, too, was dressed in the livery of his father's Hunt, wearing a little tricorne hat with an ostrich feather, a little green cut-away coat and a little red waistcoat laced with gold, little white leather breeches, and little Napoleon boots, and I am obliged to confess that he looked extremely like General Tom Thumb. A mite of a pony, as narrow as a penknife, was in waiting for him. He mounted it with great confidence, and proceeded

to canter boldly and easily across the plough to the river side to join his mother and witness the death of the stag. His governor rode by his side, two grooms followed, and four *gens d'armes* watchfully prevented the crowd from pressing too close upon his heels.

The sight, when we reached the river, was very striking. Under the bank were grouped the *valets de chiens* and the huntsmen in a high state of excitement; above it stood the Empress, the *Prince Imperial*, and their *suite*, and on the opposite side of the Oise were about a hundred men in blue blouses—the inhabitants of a neighbouring village, who had turned out to see the fun. Behind us were the tall dark timber trees of the forest, in front a wide open cultivated plain, and high up on our left, the town and castle of Compiègne, distant about five miles. The stag was swimming about at his ease in the river, the hounds seemed much distressed, and a couple of huntsmen in a punt, with short carbines, were endeavouring to get into a position from which they could shoot the animal without danger to the hounds or to the people on the banks. After a good deal of dodging and one or two misses, a lucky shot struck it in the neck, when it turned short round, met the hounds, and was almost instantly drowned by them.

The day's sport was then over, and we devoted our best energies to getting back to Compiègne as fast and as fussily as we could. Why we were in such a hurry I cannot say. A wonderfully well-appointed *calèche* awaited the Empress in the high road, and trotted off with her and Princess Anna Murat; another, in which the *Prince Imperial's* governess and *bonne* were waiting for him, reconveyed that precocious young potentate back to his nursery; the *chars à banc* followed in their wake, as did the sportsmen and women on horseback and the crowd of grooms and *piqueurs*, the hounds remaining in charge of the footmen. Such a brilliant scramble and scurry I never before witnessed, such cracking of whips and jingling of bells and trotting of horses; the stout Percheron mares, in spite of the unsparing way in which they had been "bucketed" up and down the forest rides for several hours, taking home their heavy *chars à banc* with the greatest ease at the rate of eleven miles an hour.

At the *Cloche*, at Compiègne, a *table d'hôte* was ready for us hungry hunters as soon as we arrived. Overtures were made to me during the evening for the purchase both of my own horse and my niece's pony on such tempting terms that I found it very difficult to resist them; a corpulent capitalist, who had lazily passed the day in one of the Imperial *chars à banc*, sending me word that he would give any price in reason for "*le merveilleux cob*" which the tall Englishman had ridden—the said cob being sixteen hands high and eighteen years old! We were told that we ought to repair at nine o'clock to the courtyard of the castle, where the *curée*, or breaking up of the stag, would take place by torchlight, in presence of the Emperor and the Court. But at nine o'clock the last train started for Paris—so the *curée* we could not and did not see. But my groom—a grumbling Englishman—who hated being away from his wife and his beer, and

who voted Paris "a poor place," and declared that English horses must inevitably become broken-winded if they eat French hay—did see it, and told me, to my surprise, that it was such a "stunning" sight that he would have walked all the way from England rather than have missed it. Being a man of few words, he would not or could not explain to me what there was in the ceremony which struck his torpid fancy so much, but such was Jack Raven's report of the *curée* by torchlight at Compiègne, and I give it for what it may be worth.

At the railway station we entered an empty carriage, from which we were speedily ejected by the station-master, who told us that it was specially reserved for a great lady from the Castle, and, presently, the pretty little horsebreaker, who had been had over "special" from London to exhibit and sell Mr. Z.'s horses to the Emperor, but who had failed in her mission in consequence of his Majesty's absence on affairs of state, was ceremoniously handed into it by the Emperor's head groom, the guard blew his horn—the train started—we all fell asleep—and by half-past ten we were drinking tea and talking over our day's sport in our apartments at the *Grand Hotel du Louvre*.



On an Old Muff.

TIME has a magic wand !
 What is this meets my hand,
 Moth-eaten, mouldy, and
 Covered with fluff ?
 Faded, and stiff, and scant,—
 Can it be ? no, it can't—
 Yes,—I declare 'tis Aunt
 Prudence's Muff !

Years ago—twenty-three !
 Old Uncle Barnaby
 Gave it to Aunt P.—
 Laughing and teasing—
 " Pru., of the breezy curls,
 Whisper these solemn churls,
What holds a pretty girl's
 Hand without squeezing ? "

Uncle was then a lad
 Gay, but, I grieve to add,
 Gone to what's called " the bad "—
 Smoking . . and worse !
 Sleek sable then was this
 Muff, lined with *pinkiness*—
 Bloom to which Beauty is
 Seldom averse.

I see in retrospect
 Aunt, in her best bedeck'd,
 Gliding, with mien erect,
 Gravely to Meeting :
 Psalm-book, and kerchief new,
 Peeped from the Muff of Pru.—
 Young men—and pious too—
 Giving her greeting.

Pure was the life she led
 Then—from her Muff, 'tis said,
 Tracts she distributed :—
 Scapegraces many,
 Seeing the grace they lack'd,
 Follow'd her—One attack'd
 Prudence—and got his tract
 Off'n'r than any !

Love has a potent spell !
 Soon this bold Ne'er-do-well,
 Aunt's sweet susceptible
 Heart undermining,
 Slipped, so the scandal runs,
 Notes in the pretty nun's
 Muff—triple-corner'd ones—
 Pink as its lining !

Worse even, soon the jade
 Fled (to oblige her blade !)
 Whilst her friends thought that they'd
 Lock'd her up tightly :
 After such shocking games
 Aunt is of wedded dames
 Gayest—and now her name's
 Mrs. Golightly.

In female conduct flaw
 Sadder I never saw,
 Still I've faith in the law
 Of compensation.
 Once Uncle went astray—
 Smoked, joked, and swore away—
 Sworn by, he's now, by a
 Large congregation !

Changed is the Child of Sin
 Now he's (he once was thin)
 Grave, with a double chin,—
 Blest be his fat form !
 Changed is the garb he wore,—
 Preacher was never more
 Prized than is Uncle for
 Pulpit or platform.

If all's as best befits
 Mortals of slender wits,
 Then beg this Muff, and its
 Fair Owner pardon :
All's for the best,—indeed
 Such is my simple creed—
 Still I must go and weed
 Hard in my garden.

FREDERICK LOCKER.

Bookselling in the 13th Century.

IN a former article* an attempt was made to dispel the popular error respecting the scarcity of books under the Roman Empire, and to show that, even without the aid of the Printing Press, books were both numerous and inexpensive, thanks to slave-labour on the one hand, and to a brisk demand for books on the part of the Roman people. We have no such error to dispel in our present article. No one is misled as to the small place occupied by books and bookselling in the days before printing was invented; and we have therefore no paradox with which to pique curiosity. All we wish to do is to lay before our readers such scanty facts as we have gleaned respecting the condition of bookselling at its origin in modern times—at the very close of the Middle Ages, and commencement of the new era.

If in the Middle Ages books were rare and costly, it was not, as many suppose, because printing was unknown, nor was it because slave-labour had ceased, but mainly because the ignorance and apathy of the public in all directions opened by literature, reduced the demand for books to a minimum, and because this feeble demand permitted the production of books to become more and more costly, keeping the art of producing them in a few hands. In those ages only the clergy could read and write; nor could they *always* boast of these small accomplishments. The ignorance of many of the lower clergy may be estimated by an anecdote and a decree. The anecdote is preserved in the epistles of Boniface, where we read that Pope Zacharias complained of having heard a priest in Bavaria baptize a child *in nomine Patria, et Filia, et Spiritus Sancti!* This proves that he must have learned the Church Service by rote. The decree is that of the Council of Toledo, which forbids any one being ordained as a priest *unless* he can read the psalms and has some knowledge of the ceremonies.† If such was the culture of the clergy, we may suppose a complete ignorance on the part of the laity; and the learned Benedictines assure us that during the tenth and eleventh centuries it was rare to find a layman in France who could read and write.‡ Did not the name of clerk long continue the synonyme of one who could read and write? Even kings were seldom able to sign their names. Our series of royal autographs begins with Richard II.

* "Publishing before the Age of Printing."—*Cornhill Magazine*, January 1864.

† *Concil. Tolet. VIII. c. 8*, decrevimus, ut nullus cujuscunque dignitatis ecclesiasticæ deinceps percipiat gradum, qui non psalterium vel canticorum usualium et hymnorum sive baptizandi perfecte noverit supplementum.—EICHORN: *Allgemeine Geschichte der Cultur*, 1799, II. 14.

Histoire littéraire de la France, VII. 2.

For such a public, books would have been about as appetizing as apple-dumplings to a lion. It was only in the Church and in the extremely restricted circle of jurists and doctors, that literature had any existence. The Church was forced to keep some small culture alive, and monks were copyists by necessity as well as by inclination. Partly because the parchment on which they wrote was costly, and partly because the art of copying was pursued at leisure and under no great stimulus, the manuscripts became more and more splendid and elaborate. Whoever has cast a glance at the Illuminated Manuscripts which are still preserved, will understand the sarcasm of the Bolognese jurist, Odofredi, who in the thirteenth century said that writers were no longer writers but painters.* A division of labour soon became established, one writing the letters, another designing the initials and borders. In several old manuscripts we see places left for the illuminator, which have not been filled up. Nor was this luxury of "getting-up" confined to Bibles and Missals. Even law books, which are now so plain, were then splendid; and a writer in the twelfth century complains that in Paris the Professor of Jurisprudence required two or three desks to support his copy of Ulpian, gorgeous with golden letters.†

When, therefore, we read, as we often read, of the enormous sums paid for books in the Middle Ages, we should remember that these prices represent what in our days would be prices paid for works of art or *virtu*. Respecting the actual cost of any manuscript which was simply a copy of some ancient or contemporary work, we have tolerably precise information, since the sum is often named in the work itself. The prices varied according to the extent, age, rarity, and popularity of the original.‡ In general, a work was copied then, as it would be by our law-stationers now, at a fixed sum per folio.

At first there was no sale of books. The monks were employed in various monasteries copying works, and these copies were exchanged for others, or sent away as presents. Gradually, a sort of commerce sprang up. And when universities were founded, the demands of students and professors caused a greater activity, to supply which there arose a regular class of copyists. The invention of paper, which in the thirteenth century came into general use, was of great importance; not only did it replace the expensive parchment, and enable copies to be made at a comparatively trifling cost, but it put a stop to the wholesale destruction of ancient manuscripts by the ignorance and cupidity of monks, who sold valuable works as mere parchment, or erased the productions of Greek and Roman

* Hodie scriptores non sunt scriptores, imo pictores, unde dicimus quod chartæ cedunt literis, secus ac olim, cum boni erant pictores mali scriptores, tabula cedebat picturæ, literæ cedebant chartæ."—FATTORINI: *De claris archigymnasiis Bononiensis professoribus a sæculo XI. usque ad XIV.* 1769, I. 187.

† MEINERS: *Historische Vergleichung der Sitten*, &c. 1793, II. 538.

‡ KIRCHOFF, in his erudite little work, *Die Handschriftenhändler des Mittelalters*, Leipzig, 1853, has given a long list of prices paid for various manuscripts.

thinkers to replace them with their own foolish legends and homilies. Benvenuto da Imola has told us what Boccaccio, his venerable master, had related to him of his experience at the celebrated monastery of Monte Casino, one of the very earliest founded, and long renowned for its classic treasures. He asked to see the library, and found it a mere lumber-room. On inquiring why so many priceless works were mutilated as he saw them, he was told that when the monks were in need of a few pence, they took a sheet, erased the writing, and replaced it by a psalm.*

When paper came into use, and a small public of students was ready, what was the position of booksellers? Very different from that of the magnates of the Row in our day; though, even in our day, certain lingering traces of the old conditions are discernible. Booksellers were at first mainly book-lenders, and hardly to be called publishers at all. They did sell books, but their chief trade was in Mr. Mudie's way. They were called stationers, *stationarii*; and the name still lingers in Stationer's Hall, the great fountain of legalized publication. Why they were so named is by no means clear. Crevier tells us that one of the meanings of the Latin word *statio* is *entrepôt*, and he adds that the booksellers did little else in those days than furnish a place of deposit where private persons could send their manuscripts for sale.† Kirchoff intimates that *stationarii* meant stationary or resident booksellers, as distinguished from wandering pedlars. Does the fact that in those days‡ the vendors of drugs were also styled stationers, throw any light upon the subject; and does it account for the general practice on the Continent, and in our smaller provincial towns, of combining the sale of stationery with that of drugs and groceries?

It is certain that the stationers not only lent books, but also acted as commission agents for the sale of books deposited with them. And what a commission! Think of it, ye magnificent bibliopoles who quaff your champagne out of author's skulls (which every one knows is the daily practice), think of your commission being limited to one or two per cent., and, on very rare transactions, for very small sums! Think of being by law forbidden to buy any work yourself which had been deposited with you for sale, or to get any one else to buy it for you, unless it had been with you for a whole month! For those were not the days of liberty, least of all of free trade. All trades and professions were jealously controlled by the strong but not discriminating hand of Government. No one was supposed to understand his own interest so well as the paternal Government understood it. No one was thought able to manage his business without aid from those who had no interest in it. The *stationarii* were under the control of the universities; and in 1275, that of Paris published a statute, which forced every stationer to take the oath of allegiance once a year; and forced him to do many other things which

* BENVENUTI IMOLENSIS: *Comment. in Dantis Commed.* quoted in MURATORI.

† CREVIER: *Hist. de l'Université de Paris.* 1761, II. 66.

‡ MEINERS: *op. cit.* II. 539.

would cause the Row to murmur somewhat rebelliously. He was obliged to exhibit every book at once, announcing both the title and its price. If a purchaser came, the bookseller was not trusted with receiving the money; he could only stand by and see it paid over to the proprietor, receiving at the same time his commission. There was not much champagne quaffed out of *that*, I imagine. If this restricted bookseller was guilty of any fraud or contravention of the statutes, he was fined heavily, deprived of his office, and all teachers and students were forbidden to have dealings with him, on penalty of losing their privileges.

In 1292, the bookselling corporation of Paris consisted of twenty-four copyists, seventeen bookbinders, nineteen parchment dealers, thirteen illuminators, and eight simple dealers in manuscripts. In 1323, the number of *stationarii* and *librarii* was twenty-nine—of whom, two were women: a detail which reminds us that women have ever since continued to figure as publishers and printers in France; and only in the last few years have we known such things in England.

Jews were, for some reason or other, forbidden to sell books; nor have they ever shown a very lively desire to quaff their champagne through the agency of literature. But in the 13th century, if any Jew had a manuscript for sale, he was obliged to employ a stationer. Such was the law. It is needless to say that the Jews found little difficulty in evading it.

Besides the stationers, Paris had several pedlars, or, as we should call them, stall-keepers, not attached to the university, yet not free from university control: such, for example, as the rule forbidding them to sell any work at a higher price than ten sous (a proof that *all* books were not beyond the reach of slender purses); and the rule which denied them the right of selling in shops or booths, permitting them only to exhibit their wares under the free heaven. Who does not recognize the descendants of these pedlars? Will you ever again spend a morning turning over the volumes ranged along the parapets of Paris quays, or on the benches by the Palazzo Riccardi in the Via Larga of Florence, or in the Place du Panthéon at Rome, without thinking of the Middle Ages? Will you ever pass an inverted umbrella, with its prints and old books, erect by the curbstone of Oxford Street, or Tottenham Court Road, and not see in it the lineal descendant of the unattached Parisian bookseller?

In Bologna the stationers were obliged to be men of learning, capable of looking after the correctness of the manuscript they lent. A heavy fine for every incorrectness sharpened their vigilance. In these university towns the sale of books might be small, but the loan of books was tolerably active. Each book was divided into regular parts (*petiis*—or folios, as we should now call them), and the price for the loan of each part was fixed: sometimes it was only a few farthings, sometimes several shillings, and in very rare cases, pounds. Thus while the ordinary school-books were accessible even to poor students, the more valuable books were not even to be read without a long purse. It was the sense of this

that induced a certain Archdeacon of Canterbury to leave, by will, all his theological works to the Chancellor of the Église de Paris, who was also a librarian, with the express command that they were to be lent gratuitously to poor students.*

How seldom books were bought may be estimated from what Savigny says, that in the thirteenth century the libraries of many eminent jurists consisted of only four or six books. And, as if to keep the trade low, the university decreed that no stationer should be allowed to sell or give books to any other university;† nor was he allowed to put a higher price on the books than had been fixed in former days. Nay, the very students were forbidden to take a book away from the city unless under express permission. In Paris also it was forbidden to sell any book without the permit of the University, "afin qu'il soit pris des mesures pour d'une part ne point empêcher le gain du libraire, et de l'autre faire en sorte que l'université ne soit point privée de l'usage d'un exemplaire qui peut lui être utile."‡ Students were allowed to make copies of works for themselves, if they deposited a sufficient pledge with the stationer; but this was a luxury few students indulged in.

However, the protectionist policy may have obstructed the trade of literature, it is clear that the great obstacle lay in the public apathy. No sooner was there a demand for books than the means of supplying that demand were found. Had the masses needed literature, copyists would have been as plentiful as gardeners are now. In the middle of the fourteenth century when the intellectual ferment was beginning to work, Milan alone had as many as forty professional scribes; and it soon became the fashion to possess manuscripts. Philip of Burgundy is said by his secretary to have kept scribes very much as the Romans did: "pour être garni d'une librairie non pareille à toutes," says Aubert; "il a dès son jeune eige eu à ses geiges plusieurs traducteurs grands clerks, experts orateurs, historiens et escripvains, et en diverses contrées en gros nombre diligemment labourans."§ And the practice of copying was continued long after the invention of printing, copies being made even from printed books. Greek books were copied until the 16th century, when the labours of Aldus, Froben, and Estienne finally established the supremacy of type.

* CREVIER: *op. cit.*

† "Statuimus, ut stationarii exempla tenentes nunc vel in futurum non presumant vendere, vel alio modo alienare, ut portentur ad studium alterius civitatis."—FATTORINI: *op. cit.* II. 224; MEINERS: *op. cit.* II. 541; KIRCHOFF: *op. cit.* 22.

‡ CREVIER: II. 285.

§ *Hist. des bibliothèques publiques de Bruxelles*, 1840, p. 20, quoted by KIRCHOFF.

Club-House Sobriety.

OF all the many changes which of late years have occurred in the habits and manners of the English people, there is perhaps not one more striking than that which has reversed the truth of the proverb "As drunk as a lord." At the time it arose, like most other proverbs, it was founded on truth; the nobility, as well as the middle classes, not only considered drunkenness as no disgrace, but not unfrequently looked at it as the characteristic of a good fellow. In those days a three-bottle man was considered as a being to be envied, and one who took regularly his bottle of port a day as a good-natured estimable man. In the present day is there such a being as a drunken lord? We by no means profess to have a very large acquaintance with the peerage, but the result of our experience is, that we have never met with a drunken nobleman. Nor is this extraordinary sobriety characteristic only of the aristocracy; the middle classes, and those principally in direct association with the latter, fully share in the credit due to temperance. It can, without the slightest difficulty, be proved, and by undoubted statistics, that the middle and higher orders of Englishmen are now the most sober body of men in Europe, while so great was formerly their reputation for intemperance, that the scandal is not even yet extinct in France, notwithstanding better acquaintance with our nation. The Englishman of their farces is almost always a hard drinker.

Whence, then, this extraordinary change in the drinking habits in the middle and higher orders of Englishmen? Many reasons have been given for it, such as the introduction of the lighter French and German wines, after the cessation of the war. Possibly this might have had some effect, but not to the extent imagined, because claret was as well known and as much drunk before the war as it is now, and our countrymen had even then the reputation of being hard drinkers; and it is more than probable that the proverb, "As drunk as a lord," arose before port wine was much in vogue in England. Another reason has been given—that the example of sobriety shown us by foreigners has been imitated; but this appears not only uncomplimentary to the intelligence of our higher orders, who have been in communication with them, but invalid as concerns the poorer of the middle orders who cannot afford to travel, and yet are perhaps the most sober portion of our population. The temperance shown by shopmen and clerks in our larger business establishments is most praiseworthy. True, occasionally one of these, when out for his holiday, may make a simpleton of himself, by imitating the manners of a fast young man, as portrayed in some farce he may have seen, or become over-heated by some abominable mixture he may have swallowed at a singing or smoking saloon; but a

severe headache the next day, and a smart reproof from his employer generally atones for the indiscretion, and during the next six months he is content with the exceedingly innocent table-beer of the establishment.

Perhaps to no cause can the extraordinary revolution in the drinking habits of the higher and middle classes of society in this country be more distinctly traced than to the introduction of the club-house system. It may be said that club-houses existed for the aristocracy long before this drinking reformation commenced, but this is not altogether correct. That White's, Boodle's, and Brook's, may have been founded many years before sobriety became the distinctive characteristic of a gentleman is true; but they were very different in their organization from modern clubs, and, in fact, from the habits of their own members at the present day. Had Sir Richard Mayne existed half a century since, and those clubs had been allowed to remain in their then state without any interference, he would have been most justly accused of neglect of duty; they would, to a certainty, have been indicted as nuisances by such a body of men as generally, with all their faults, compose our modern parochial boards. Even in later times, not more than thirty years since, this total disregard to decency in the management of our clubs existed, and the notorious Crockford's may be quoted as an example. They carried with them, also, a certain sort of absolution. To become one of their members seemed to give a licence to behave like a "roué," or a blackleg, if it pleased them, without remark or objection. It is occasionally amusing to note our "honest John Bull" contempt of our French neighbours' "extenuating circumstances," and then examine a little into the manner in which we used to find extenuating circumstances in the lives and habits of those who lived upon gambling, and that too of a description which occasionally not only bordered closely on swindling, but sometimes passed the limits. It is curious for those old enough to look back on the leaders of fashion in those days, and imagine in what repute they would be held in the present.

But to return to the subject matter of our paper—the change in the drinking habits of the middle and higher orders. It appears to have commenced about the time the club-house system, in the present acceptation of the word, began to be in fashion. In a club a member is not obliged to drink for the benefit of the house. In hotels, on the contrary, it is almost an absolute necessity. Consider a member of parliament, or a lord, remaining for a fortnight or three weeks at an hotel without drinking wine, and then imagine the amount of respect "mine host" would have for him at the expiration of his sojourn. It is, perhaps, this one principle in the club-house system which renders it far more conducive to temperance than the tavern or public-house. A considerable disturbance took place some few years since in London, in consequence of an attempt to close public-houses on the Sunday, and the public press to a great extent sympathised with the rioters, justly considering that if the rich man's public-house (his club) was allowed to remain open, it was a gross piece of despotism to deny the poor man a similar advantage.

Although the argument had great reason in it, at the same time it was hardly perfect. The great objection to the public-house being open was, the frequent desecration of the Sabbath which arose from it. The same objection does not apply to clubs—and why? The members are already educated in temperance, and have no part in those disturbances which mark on the police-court registers on Monday, how hard it is for the working population to resist the temptation of open public-houses on Sunday. Few of our readers are aware of the immense sums spent in these places by the London workmen. An advertisement some time since appeared in the *Dispatch* newspaper, for the sale of a large public-house in Edgeware Road, the returns of which were 240*l.* a week. This is an amount equal to the whole expenditure for wine, beer, and spirits, of the Athenæum, Reform, and Conservative clubs put together, with a balance of more than a thousand a year to spare. The returns of the Trevor Hall, Knightsbridge, are said to exceed the expenditure in alcoholic liquors of the four largest clubs in St. James's put together, and yet there are seventeen other public-houses, all doing a flourishing trade, within a radius of three hundred yards of the building.

If, then, the club-house system, by shielding its members from the necessity of drinking for the benefit of the house, has had so beneficial an effect on the middle and higher classes of Englishmen, why may not a similar effect be obtained by its introduction among working-men? The amount spent in drink in many of the trades appears almost fabulous. A gang of three hundred excavators were employed last year on a certain Government work. The contractor hired, for twelve months, a small public-house near the spot where they were employed. At the end of the year, he found his men had expended at the house 7,500*l.* for beer and spirits—or an average of nearly ten shillings per head per week. Compare this with the expenditure of the different West-end clubs, and the conclusion will appear very surprising. The average weekly expenditure of each member of the Reform Club for wine, beer, and spirits is 1*s.* 3*d.*; that of the Athenæum, less than half that sum. True, it may be said that the club members have the power of drinking at home. This will make but little difference in the result. A bottle of club claret, which will cost three or four shillings, will not possess more intoxicating power than a pot of genuine stout; and if, instead of the money spent, the comparative amount of alcoholic spirit consumed with these fluids could be taken, the difference would be still more remarkable.

Apart from the demoralization attendant on intemperance, few who have not gone deeply into the matter can form an idea of the terrible effect the present habit of hard drinking has upon the welfare of our working classes. From the disgust which advocates of the Rev. Mr. Stiggins school of sobriety have occasioned in the minds of many, by their absurd denunciations of the most moderate use of stimulating drinks, the subject rarely obtains just consideration in the minds of the thinking public. There are, nevertheless, grave reasons for their moral intervention in the

subject. Let us take for our text-book that very unpoetical matter-of-fact production, the *London Post-office Directory*, and we shall find in it somewhere about ten thousand public-houses and beer shops, exclusive of inns, taverns, hotels, eating-houses, clubs, and all other establishments where fermented or distilled liquors are sold. Give every public-house or beer shop in London an average frontage of twenty-one feet, and we shall find, if placed side by side, they would make a row of houses thirty-nine miles in length. To find the amount of money spent annually in these establishments would require more time and space than we could bestow upon the question, but we will take one portion of it alone; the rent, taxes, gas, and establishment charges—all of which the customer has, indirectly, to pay for before he obtains the commodity he requires. Let us assume, then, that the average rent, taxes, and establishment charges of the London public-house to be 125*l.* per annum. This sum is far below the real amount, but we like always to work on minimum data. Let us find what the aggregate amount of the whole would represent in different items of our municipal expenditure. In the first place it would pay the maintenance of our metropolitan police-courts, including magistrates' salaries of 74,000*l.*; also, the maintenance of the metropolitan police force, 140,000*l.* It would further maintain the 7,000 beds of the metropolitan hospitals, at an average expenditure of 40*l.* per bed. Beyond that it would pay for the whole maintenance of the metropolitan poor, 700,000*l.* a year, and then leave a surplus beyond all, sufficient for national education as well. It is assumed that, in public-house expenditure, the rent averages one-fifth part of the gross returns. If, then, the working-man, without becoming a teetotaler, drank only one-fifth less than he does at present, what an immense amount of domestic comfort he might obtain from his abstinence.

But if this immense advantage to his physical and moral welfare may be obtained by greater sobriety in the working-man, which the middle and higher classes already possess, ought not the latter to instruct and assist the working-man to obtain the same end? We have no lack of other missions to the working-classes,—why should we omit the one which we can, with the best possible conscience, preach—namely, sobriety? Nothing can be easier if the end is to be obtained by the formation of working-men's clubs; and we maintain that it can. It has been argued that to establish a club on a proper footing, it should be regulated and governed by the members themselves; and so great is the desire for stimulating drinks among our working-classes, that they would be able to give full sway to their darling vice of drinking in these establishments. At the present time public-houses are under the surveillance of the law, and if a publican conducts his house in an improper manner, the magistrates have the power of depriving him of his licence, but over the clubs they would have no control, and the evils at present complained of would then simply be worse. Unfortunately, working-men's clubs are as yet not sufficiently numerous for us to give a direct negative to the assertion,

though the few proofs we could offer would all tend to a totally different result. One case in point we will quote.

A certain Miss Adeline Cooper, a lady taking great interest in the poor of the lower parts of Westminster, succeeded in establishing a costermonger's club in Duck Lane. It was to be organized on the same liberal footing as the Pall Mall clubs,—every member having the right to a voice in the framing or altering the rules for its government. A number of rules had already been decided on, when the question was raised, whether beer should be sold on the premises? Here poor Miss Cooper was in a state of great trepidation, her club consisting of one hundred and twenty members, twenty-five being teetotalers, and ninety-five drinking men. On the night appointed for considering the question, the chairman put it to the meeting. The first speaker was a drinking man, in the full, even fullest, acceptance of the term.

"Now I'll tell you what my opinion about this is," he said. "I ain't a teetotaler, nor I don't intend being one, and that's more; and when I want a glass of beer, I intend having it, if I can afford to pay for it. But, as matters at present stand, if I want a pint of beer I can go to the public-house for it; and if I want to get away from beer, and I very often do, I can come here. Now, if beer is sold here, I don't see the difference between this and a public-house, and I shall hold up my hand against it." And, to Miss Cooper's intense satisfaction, the remaining ninety-four drinking men all followed the speaker's example; and beer is not allowed to be sold in their club.

In the establishment of working-men's clubs, proper care does not generally seem to be practised in making them sufficiently attractive in appearance, and comfortable; in fact, most of them have a very squalid and poverty-stricken appearance, for which there is no real necessity. In no case, perhaps, is the economy of co-operation more distinguishable than in the formation of a club; but, unfortunately, the working-men of London, although willing enough to combine for defence, are hardly sensible to the advantages to be derived from mutual assistance; and, in those instances where they attempt to practise it, they ignore the principle that the greater the number of co-operators, if the machinery be proportionably well arranged, the greater the benefit to the association.

A lecture was last winter given by a gentleman to a large number of costermongers in the neighbourhood of the Borough, on the value of prudence, and the necessity of setting by something for a rainy day. He dwelt strongly on his subject, and his eloquence had a visible effect on his auditory. When he had finished, an animated conversation took place between him and some of the costermongers.

"You seem to think, sir," said one, "that costermongers are a very imprudent set, but we are not. Now, down here, we subscribe to a benefit society, and we pay up our money regularly. There has not been a man among us behind-hand during the whole winter."

"But how much do you put by a week?" asked the lecturer.

"Sixpence a week, sir."

"Where does your club hold its meetings?"

"At the King's Head, sir," was the reply.

"But why do you hold it at a public-house?"

"To save money, sir. The landlord is a very kind-hearted man, and he lets us have the room for nothing."

"That seems all very well; but what do you spend at his house in the week?" inquired the lecturer.

"Well, one with another, sir, about a shilling a week."

This answer the lecturer knew perfectly well was dictated by the man's modesty. Half-a-crown a week would most probably have been far under the mark.

"What a pity it is," he observed, "that a large number of you working men do not combine together, and get up a good club, with a room or building of your own for your meetings! you would be much more comfortable than you are at present."

"Now, sir," said the costermonger, "how can you talk in that manner? With you gentlemen it is all very well; but how are a number of poor men such as we are to get the money together for any thing of the kind? Why, our rent alone would be more than two hundred pounds a year!"

"You say," said the lecturer, "that you spend one shilling a week with the landlord, and save sixpence. Let a thousand of you join together and give me the eighteen-pence a week, and instead of two hundred a year for your rent, I will pay five hundred; I will pay one hundred a year more for repairs and taxes, two hundred more for fuel and gas, three hundred more for clerk and servants to keep up the place. I will allow you one hundred newspapers a day, I will allow you five hundred a year to purchase books for your library and pay lecturers to instruct you, and I will then hand over to your benefit fund two thousand a year more."

"It is impossible, sir."

"Calculate it yourself,—you costermongers are generally very quick at figures."

The man did so, and found to his great astonishment, that the lecturer's calculation was correct.

But to make the working men understand the advantages of the club-house system, it is necessary that those instructed in the matter should combine and teach them. They would be certain to be received with respect. Any one accustomed to mix much with the English working classes will endorse the statement that, if addressed as men, and not as children, they listen attentively and thankfully, and any suggestions which may be offered for their improvement they will readily adopt. And perhaps no better time than the present could be named for a movement of the kind, for large numbers of the more intelligent working men are adopting temperance principles, not on account of any imaginary sin concealed in the beer they drink, but simply because they are better able to

support excessive fatigue without it. An experiment in proof was tried about a year since, in some brick-fields near Fulham. A gang of temperance men, drinking water or cold tea, challenged a gang of drinking men to a trial of strength. They were to work for a certain number of days, and at the end, the party who should have made the greater number of bricks should be declared the winner. The temperance men beat their opponents by several thousand. Now, with the exception of excavators, no class of workmen drink more beer than brick-makers—four or five gallons a day being no unusual quantity when at full work in hot weather. Many working men in other trades are discovering the advantages of temperance in a physiological point of view. Almost all the glass-blowers and gas furnace men in Southwark have adopted it, from their greater ability to support fatigue without drinking beer. Last year a farmer in Hampshire hired a gang of reapers to mow and harvest several large fields of wheat, and the work was to be done by contract. When the price had been agreed on, the farmer addressed them in something like the following terms :—"Now it is as much to your advantage as mine that this wheat should be got in as quickly as possible. Work well, and you shall have as much good beer or cold tea as you choose to drink during the time, and I will give you a good harvest supper when you have done." To the farmer's great surprise, all the hands chose the cold tea; but as if to show that this was done on no moral principle, but simply from a conviction that they were better able to support fatigue upon the tea, they all got conscientiously drunk at the harvest supper.

Many other instances and arguments might be brought to show the probable advantages of the adoption of the club-house system among our working classes, but want of space will not allow us to go deeper into the subject. Suffice it to say, that any gentlemen acquainted with club management, and who may have some idle time on their hands, would do really a good and great work if they would assist in the working man's club movement.

A Child of Nature.



HERE are men, generally popular, with whom I confess to an imperfect sympathy. The "large-hearted man" is one; another is "the child of Nature." I may have been unfortunate in my experiences, and may have known the less amiable specimens of the class, but it happens that whenever I have known a "large-hearted man," he has been one supremely careless about money (the money of others), indifferent to most of the ordinary duties of life, neglectful of his children, except in fondling them, but full of "generous sentiments" for mankind at large, and

for any one who has no special claims upon him. I cannot sympathize with such a nature. I cannot admire the generosity which ignores duty, and which seeks its objects away from those who have a righteous claim upon it. To smile upon your neighbour's wife is cheap amiability. Nor does it appear very difficult to be above small economies, when you are not above running freely into debt. If a large-hearted man refuses to muddle away his income in paying tradesmen's bills, it is easy for him to have a few sovereigns disengaged for charity or hospitality. In like manner, if he abstains from bringing his "generous sentiments" to the control of daily duties, he can afford to keep a large stock of sentiment on hand. One cannot help admiring a noble thought, or a generous phrase, let it come from whom it may; but it should be a living bud upon a living stem, not worn in the button-hole as an ornament. What especially offends in the large-hearted man, is the open self-glorification, the shameless eulogies which he bestows on his own moral character, sometimes by implication only, sometimes by direct self-praise. He will discourse to you of his feelings, pretending to treat them as failings, with an amount of self-laudation which if it related to his beauty or accom-

plishments would call forth shouts of laughter, or words of scorn. He has no moral modesty.

In this respect the French are great offenders. They have adopted the unpleasant trick of claiming for *La France* as a nation, and for themselves individually, the constant guidance of the noblest motives. Every week, journalists and statesmen gravely assure the world that England is only actuated by selfish commercial motives, *tandis que la France—she* is the willing victim of generous sentiments, her polity is based on great ideas. France is a large-hearted nation; but, perhaps, there is not more work-day virtue there than elsewhere.

In a somewhat similar way, one is repelled by the "child of nature." The man who claims this title is always justifying his failures and imperfections by the quiet implication of a superiority to ordinary humanity. He has none of the dross which mingles with common metal. He wants you to believe that his careless disregard of others is owing to the simplicity of his uncorrupted nature. He rejects conventions; and with him duties are very apt to wear the aspect of conventions. The world and the world's ways are not for such as he. His motives are *instincts*, and his instincts, I observe, generally tend in the direction of what is pleasant to himself. He is eloquent on Manhood; on the duties of citizenship he is silent. He is all-heart,—if you will believe him, which you can't.

The child of nature is very popular with those who have not much to do with him, and very exasperating to those who have claims upon him, especially to those who have business transactions with him. The exasperation is increased because he spreads over his conduct a sort of virtuous varnish, which places him in an attitude of superiority. It is the same with the wicked things perpetrated in the name of Religion; you resent them the more because you are called on to respect the motive, and you know that in any other name such actions dare not be avowed.

Children of nature are, of course, like other men, of a mixed kind; some are really amiable, others very selfish. In some the chief defect is a sort of *blarney*; and this was the case with poor T., now no longer living, who was one of the least objectionable specimens I ever knew. T. had the pleasant Irish nature which fascinates even those who most keenly perceive its defects. He had a touch of genius, too, in his way, and was one of those men of whom it is commonly said, that they are no man's enemies but their own; a foolish saying, I believe, since he who is his own enemy, is the enemy of all men brought into relation with him.

I was never thrown into any relation with T. more direct than mere acquaintanceship. My sympathy with him was an imperfect sympathy. I liked his heartiness, his kindly manner, and his Irish accent; but I never felt quite comfortable in his presence, because it was impossible to believe in his sincerity. He seemed always acting a part. There was always a suspicion of rouge on the cheek of that innocence.

T. called himself a child of nature. He forgot to specify *what* nature. One day Douglas Jerrold, who liked and laughed at him,

happening to quote a familiar passage from Milton, T. exclaimed with enthusiasm—

"That's fine! Who said that!"

"Come, T., don't pretend that you don't know it's Milton."

"Me dear boy, I've never read him."

"Never read Milton! and you a poet!"

"I've scarcely read anything. I was suckled at the breasts of Nayture herself"

"Yes," retorted the terrible Jerrold, "but you put a deal of rum in her milk."

I remember one night being with him at the theatre when some maudlin domestic piece, which he persisted in admiring, was wearying the pit. In answer to my criticisms, he closed his eyes with an air of ineffable superiority, and said,—

"The fact is, me boy, I can't criticize. I'm a perfect choild at the play. Me harrt is young."

"Yes, but you are a dramatist, and your intellect is not that of a child."

"What seems to you critics trash as leeterature, touches me as Nayture."

And he meant me to understand that an unsophisticated heart would find good in everything, even in maudlin melodramas. So audacious was his assumption of simplicity, that at times it had the aspect of the wildest burlesque. Thus, one evening at Covent Garden during the performance of *La Sonnambula* (or some such opera, in which the tenor has to maltreat the heroine for a time), T. went round to the green-room, after the second act, and addressing the tenor with great fervour, said,—

"Me dear boy, ye're playing this deloightfully—to perfection."

"I'm very much flattered, Mr. T. Praise from you is indeed a compliment."

"Ye deserve it intirely. But tell me"—with sudden eagerness—"I can't stay—I've an engagement—tell me, d'ye mARRY the girl in the third act?"

The tenor, somewhat puzzled at this question, perhaps also by the strange interest with which it was asked, had barely answered "yes," when T. seized him by the hand, with an expression of affectionate gratitude, and exclaimed—

"Ye do? God bless ye! ye're a goodfellow! Good-by; ye're a fine fellow! God bless ye!"

And he hurried away, leaving every one to form his own conclusions as to such simplicity in a dramatist of fifty.

Perhaps the reader may be charitable enough to believe that in the two foregoing anecdotes there was really more sincerity than would be credited by those unacquainted with very simple people; and that T., in spite of a life-long acquaintance with the theatre, may have preserved his childlike belief in the stage. Here are two other anecdotes which may perhaps throw light on this point.

One day I went with him to Covent Garden Theatre to see the manager, and as we entered at the stage-door we found the old door-keeper engaged cooking a chop over his small fire. He welcomed T. with a respectful greeting. T. seized him by the hand as if overjoyed at the sight of an old friend.

"And how d'ye find yourself, me friend—well? That's harry! I'm delighted! That's harry! And how's yere dear wife?"

"I haven't a wife, Mr. T."

"No more ye have," said the unabashed child of nature; "of course ye haven't. But ye're well? That's right. That's harry! Ye can't think how glad I am to see ye."

And we passed into the theatre, leaving the old man convinced that Mr. T. was a very pleasant gentleman, who would have been glad to hear of the wife's health,—had there been a wife. When I related this to Jerrold he capped it with the following story—

He was one day walking with T. down Holborn, when a gentleman came up, and was welcomed by T. with overflowing cordiality, which the stranger suddenly interrupted with—

"But you *never* came to dine the other day!—we waited for you over an hour. It was such a disappointment!"

T. struck his forehead, as if remonstrating with his oblivious weakness, and replied—

"No more I did! It escaped me memory, intirely. But I tell ye hwhat, I'll dine with ye on Saturday next."

"Will you, Mr. T.?"

"I will."

"Without fail?"

"Without fail. At what hour?"

"Six, if agreeable."

"At six!"

"Then we may expect you next Saturday?"

"Next Saturday, at six. Good-by, God bless ye!"

"Good-by; and mind you don't forget Saturday."

"I'll be there! God bless ye! Saturday, at six—good-by—at six——"

The stranger departed, and T. continued shouting good-by's after him; then putting his arm within Jerrold's, he walked on a few paces in silence, and at length said, quietly—

"I wonder hwhat the divil his name is now?"

Jerrold used to tell of his trying to get T. to write a Life of Shakspeare for a bookseller, who offered to pay liberally for it. T. was standing behind the scenes at the Haymarket when the proposal was made, and, to the amusement of Jerrold and the actors, he exclaimed—

"Me dear Jerrold! I *couldn't*—indeed, I couldn't! Don't ask it! I *couldn't*. Me rivrence for that immortal bard is such—don't ask it! A Life of Shakspeare? I couldn't touch it."

"Nonsense, T.: no man would do it better."

"Write Shakspeare's life? Think of it, me boy! Think of me feelings. I couldn't—no money could induce me. Besides," he added, as if this were quite by the way—"besides, *I know very little about him.*"

T. was one day talking in a strain of great seriousness on the importance of making the Bible the only rule of life. What he said was full of sound sense; and yet, somehow, its effect was diminished by our unconquerable suspicion of his *blarney*; and, perhaps, also by the smell of that stimulant he was supposed to have mingled with Nature's milk. Judge, then, of our gravity, when he said—

"I speak from me own experience. I've always stood by me Bible at any cost. I've known trouble: it has saved me. I've known hwat it is to want a penny, but I've stood by me Bible, and it has always been a shilling!"

Some one suggested—

"What! you pawned it?"

But he answered this ribaldry, which set us off laughing, by closing his eyes, as if mentally retiring upon his serene conviction.

Let me say, however, that if T. had abundance of blarney, he was wholly without guile. I believe he was a truly affectionate man, and that his friends were very fond of him, overlooking all his little failings as the natural consequences of his childlike nature. They defended him on the pretext that he had an Irish heart. A better heart than the Irish does not exist; but my regard for Erin will not permit my accepting T. as a type of her best order of men. Kindliness is a national characteristic, and blarney is the weak side of that kindliness: the desire to give pleasure overcoming an imperfect sincerity. I never heard T. say an ill-natured word of anybody. I never knew him do an ill-natured thing. And yet such was the effect of his transparent insincerity, that one never knew what to believe of his kindly phrases. This much, at least, was childlike in him, that he had no sense of serious responsibility, and no suspicion of his self-betrays.

The anecdote which may fitly conclude this sketch, is eminently characteristic of the headlong inconsiderateness with which he would plunge into flattery. He was the pride of a small club over which he presided, somewhere in Camden Town. The members met weekly, or monthly, I forget which, in the parlour of a quiet inn, where they supped plainly, and passed the night over their pipes and grog, in chatting, varied by dreary comic songs and dreary sentimental ballads. The members were mostly small tradesmen, with justly enough tincture of literature to make them regard T. as a very great man indeed; and to be respectful to the one or two literary men who were attracted there by him. One night after a longer absence than usual, T. again took his place at the head of the table, amid uproarious cheering. His *amour propre* was tickled, nay, not tickled, it was luxuriously stroked by the flattering speeches in which the members expressed at once their regret at having

been so long deprived of his illustrious presence, and their gratitude at his return.

His speech, in reply, was unforgettable. With one hand lovingly caressing his glass of brandy and water, and with the other carelessly dropped inside his breast, the Child of Nature proved himself at the height of the occasion. I cannot, of course, pretend to give all his speech, but some fragments are worth preserving :—



"I've been long away from ye, me friends, but me harrt has always been here. (Cheers.) I've had to go into society, but it was against the grain. In the saloons of fashion me thoughts have wandered to the Red Lion. And shall I tell ye hwhy? Shall I tell ye hwhy society is always wearisome to me? It is because of all things I want to feel myself in the presence of harrts—simple, manly harrts—and ye know how little there is of *that* hidden under conventional trappings. (Cheers, and clatter of pipes and glasses.) No, me friends, there can be no pleasure where there is not *manhood*. (Hear, hear!) The deloight I expeerience in this room, is the deloight of feeling the présence of *man*. Here we cast aside the pitiful artifices of society—here we only recognize simple nayture. (Hear! hear!)"

A particularly shrill voice was heard squeaking amid the "hear, hears." It issued from a small humpbacked tailor seated on the orator's right, who, with pipe suspended in the air, was looking up into his face with enthusiastic admiration. The squeak arrested the orator's attention. Pausing for a moment, and then triumphantly pointing at the little man, with the air of a professor demonstrating from a diagram, he continued:—

"Me friend, here, is a tailor, is he not? (He is! he is!) Well, and hwat of that? He's a tailor, but, I ask, is he no *more* than tailor? Yes—he's *man*!"

The wild applause which welcomed this Demosthenic burst drowned the laughter of those few who perceived its incongruousness. And with it we may bid adieu to T.

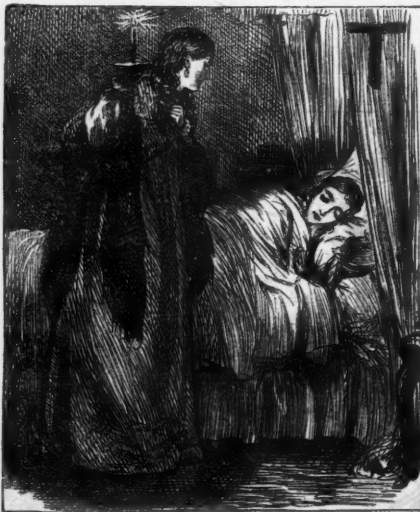


Margaret Denzil's History.

(Annotated by her Husband.)

CHAPTER XVI.

A DECLARATION.



HERE lay the letters, and there stood I, confounded—not so much with shame or vexation, as with an overwhelming sense of the fatality which had led me into a position scarcely equivocal. To be discovered romantically disposed upon a stile, with her lover's letters in her lap, is what no woman not love-sick or a "little fool" would choose; and yet that was the situation into which I had been betrayed by the Fate which amuses herself with making stories of men's lives, as mortals write a novel

or a play. Not that I was the leading character in this episode: accident made sport of me, but only to make choicer sport of him.

That Arthur Lamont knew the letters to be his, was manifest from his pretending not to observe them. I did not take them up, nor would he; but strode over them as if, being only his, and having done their errand, they were things of no further account to anybody.

"Dear Margaret," said he, lifting my unwilling hand, "how fortunate I am!"

"Are you?" I answered, startled by his "dear Margaret" out of a more reasonable reply.

"So fortunate that I begin to be afraid, and wonder how it is all meant to end. My mother is at church?"

"She is in London."

"There again! why, then, I have a double chance of your company.



AT THE STILE.

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Margaret, you have seen Arthur Lamont—a shabby gentleman: no money: no credit: maunderer, vagabond: appeared at Brighton a few months since. *Am I the same?* ”

“You are very like him, but not *quite* the same,” as indeed he was not, but a wholly different man—erect, confident, indescribably *glad*; and I was only too conscious of the reason why.

“Ah, now I shall learn!” said he, with mock gravity. “You are sure I am not a young woman with a basket of eggs on my head? Nor one of those in the Arabian Nights—a vendor of crockery? Well, they were fabulous persons to be sure, and I may consider myself real. But when one has only to dream like the crockery man and his dreams come true, he begins to doubt whether anything is true at all. Will you believe,” he continued, as we walked side by side along the hedge-row (I had not courage enough to lead him at once to the house, as I ought to have done, for that would have been hastening him to meet his sister)—“Will you believe that I discovered you sitting here while I was yet forty miles away?”

“But what if I was *not* sitting here then?”

“All the same, I saw you: or if you must have greater wonders, foresaw you. This is how it happened. I enter a railway-carriage, where I am alone,—as I wish to be. I look out upon the houses, and fields, and gardens, and I think of you.”

“Better to have thought about the fields and gardens,” said I, vaguely intending to discourage him.

“What difference? *that* was thinking of you. ‘The landscape could have little beauty,’ I say to myself, ‘without labour, as well as the sun and rain. But without sun and rain, who labours? and who knows that better than Arthur Lamont, tutor and capitalist’ (I declare I’ve nearly ten pounds of ready money!), ‘whose life was a horrible desert, like the Dead Sea shore, till somebody raised over it a heaven like that!’ lifting his hand toward the sky.

I was answered. Obviously, it was not for me to provoke any further revelation of the enthusiastic fancies he had indulged on the way.

“Well,” continued Mr. Lamont, in the same tone of confidence, gay but impressive, “I go on to wonder how we shall meet. Where shall it be? I ask myself; and I am so hard to please with time and place, that I get quite—what shall I say?—quite infumed about it. Not in madame’s drawing-room: there it is so dull that one feels sure there must be some such disorder as mahogany madness. In the road to church? Yes, if I dared to go to church too. And then I consider whether I might not venture to do so now—since everything has changed with me—when suddenly I think of the stile at the end of madame’s garden; and from that moment to the close of the journey, I have a hundred fancies of you standing alone there, where I can see you all across the meadows. And just as I fancied, so it happened, you know!”

I was obliged to confess it was rather a strange coincidence.

"Coincidence! It is more than that to me; for I have something to say, something to ask, which I might not have found courage to venture on between four walls."

"It is about my being a governess!" I exclaimed hurriedly, feeling that I must make a stand before his confidence carried me quite away.

"To begin with. Tell me, Margaret—"

"Mr. Lamont, let me speak. I only addressed Lisabeth's letter, without knowing it was so stupid, or what she had written, indeed. And I never saw your own letters till an hour ago!"

He made no answer; but what I had said had such an effect, that in one moment his old appearance of long-familiar helplessness came back; and that went to my heart.

"Then I am all wrong again," he muttered presently. "It is just as I said: the illusion is ended, and over goes the crockery basket. If you did not get my letters I have no business here, Miss Forster, and I ought to beg your pardon. And yet—what if you *had* seen them soon enough to forbid my coming? Will you let me speak now that I am here?"

What could I do? He took both my hands and spoke. I hung my head and listened, or rather I did not listen, for I knew as well as he did all he had to say. That is the use of love-dreams. I had already spoken for him, in my heart, the very language he used now; and though he repeated it so passionately, what I heard was rather the original voice, speaking within me.

The burden of his impetuous speech was still "you are my last chance!"—it was more like begging for mercy than asking for love. "Look at me. I am no longer the hopeless idle fellow of your first acquaintance, and only you, I do believe, could have given me grace and strength to become a man again. It is hard to live year after year without a word of sympathy from any creature—not even from any woman; but at last you believed me; you understood that I was not a rascal, and might yet achieve as much as others. You liked me a little, too, I thought; and so I hoped that if I earned a new character under the inspiration of your own sympathy, you might stand by me yet, and perhaps—by-and-by—marry me! Heaven knows, I am not ignorant of what I am saying! I am dull enough, but not to my own audacity in talking like this. Still—you *do* like me a little, is it not so?—while as for me, it is one thing or the other, life or death. Don't tell me I have been tricked by Fate again; for I confess I have been living in a fool's paradise ever since Lisabeth's letter arrived, and still more since I found you did not rebuke my writing to you. Why, I was even vain enough to imagine you had come out on purpose to meet me this evening!—Margaret, you do not speak! Give me a little hope to take back on this blundering journey!"

So he went on, all the more fluently because he had a passive, pensive listener. But though I did not interrupt, I could not answer him. My

mind was confused, my tongue untrustworthy; and therefore I blessed my favouring stars when, on turning about to avoid Mr. Lamont's almost pitifully eager scrutiny, I beheld Charlotte! She, who had feared to go out into the open air earlier in the day, was standing, uncovered, exactly where we two had met! She had her brother's unlucky letters in her hand (did I not leave them where they fell?), and she seemed to have just ceased reading them to fix her regards upon us.

All this boded ill, too clearly: however, my way out of one pressing difficulty was found.

"There is your sister, Mr. Lamont," said I. "Let us hasten to join her."

"One word, and I will face fifty Charlottes: without it, I'm a downy man. Make me happy enough to bless or mad enough to bite her. Have I offended you?"

"Not at all!"

"Then think of what I have said, and tell me in a word, to-morrow, whether I may go back to my fool's paradise. I never hoped for anything more than a 'perhaps,' you know. I must go on striving a long while yet for your 'yes,' of course. But, believe me, I had almost rather be deluded than denied!"

All this while we were approaching Charlotte Lamont. *He* did not understand the terrible look frozen on her face: indeed, he was so anxious to end what he had to say that he spoke too long, allowing her to overhear those last words of his. And considering what those words were, it was easy to foresee what would happen.

"Whose delusions are we discussing, Arthur? Yours or mine?" said she, without any more ceremonious greeting.

"None at all, I hope, Charlotte. I was only explaining that sometimes it may be pleasanter to be deluded than—than otherwise."

"And Miss Forster is of your opinion."

"I do not know that. She has not our experience, Charlotte; and never will have, I trust."

"But why? Not if she is very willing to acquire it?" and here Miss Lamont, looking all the while at her brother, coolly handed me his letters, open as she had read them.

"You are too unkind," he replied, reddening (as for me, I know how I blushed), "and too curious it seems. You have been reading those letters, haven't you?"

"I admit it, Arthur."

"You do? Then allow me to say you are too courageous also."

"One need be bold to protect your honour, which, unluckily, is one of my duties."

"Charlotte," replied her brother as soon as his startled wits had time to return—or some of them—"pray do not insult me before Miss Forster. She may misunderstand you. Let her pass into the house."

"But I particularly wish Miss Forster to understand you—for reasons

more than justifiable. Say, in her presence, whether you think it honourable to tamper with my mother's servants, and send clandestine letters to her pupils!"

He made no answer.

"Confess how many lies there are in those letters!"

"Go away, Margaret," said he, in a troubled voice, "and leave me to answer this madwoman alone." But the madwoman had possessed herself of my hand, holding me to her side.

"How many?" she repeated.

"Expect no reply to such an odious question."

"But this one I have a right to ask. Did you not pledge your honour never to attempt to see Miss Forster here, or to correspond with her secretly?"

Again Arthur Lamont was silent; but from the anxious look he cast on me, I could not doubt what was the true answer.

"Yes or no, Arthur? and then Miss Forster may go in, if she wishes to do so."

"I did!"

"There, Margaret," exclaimed she, releasing me at the same moment; "so much you have heard already. And I promise you that within an hour Mr. Lamont shall deny the ingenious slanders he has abused your mind with."

Glad was I to escape a scene at which I could do nothing but tremble; for Miss Lamont had put me also in the wrong, and any explanation I might have made was impossible at such a moment.

Nor had the scene ended yet. As I passed into the garden (not very briskly), I heard Mr. Lamont say, in that voice of suave irony with which I had become familiar in our conversation on the cliff—

"And now, my sister, we will come to a reckoning—for your good and mine. I comprehend what you mean by my ingenious slanders, but you credit me with too much invention. My modesty declines the compliment; and you—you would have the slanders established as truth?"

"I will have them denied!"

"Impossible. I cannot oblige you so far as to proclaim myself a liar. Enough of that! You have had no mercy for me—I'll not trifle with you; and at the end of the hour we shall see! But you tremble—you are cold! Shall we go in too?"

CHAPTER XVII.

CHARLOTTE'S VICTORY.

THE dread of being overtaken by those two—the mere imagination of how they looked upon each other while those few last words were said—hurried me to the house quickly enough; and yet, when I had reached the

threshold, I could not resist the temptation of turning to glance at them, as they came on slowly side by side. Both were very pale, both their heads bent toward the ground, and in that moment they appeared strikingly alike. People of the same family, who have little resemblance to each other in life, are often alike in death. These two were not dead; but they looked awfully as if they were going to execution.

Satisfied with one glance, I ran into my room, locking the door softly just as they passed it; and there I was left, to wait, and wonder, and tremble.

To divert my mind from what had passed between Charlotte and her brother, and still more from what I knew must be passing between them now, I endeavoured to think only of what Arthur Lamont had said to me, of his hapless errand, and of what it would be best for me to do. Their interview would end I dare not conjecture how; but whatever their differences, and however settled, I had a part to choose at once. Judge how difficult was the choice! Still, bred as I had been, with no one to think for me, no one to help me with my little troubles or even to listen to them—this was an easier task to me than it would have been to many other girls: and then much is determined in a woman's mind before she questions it.

What *should* I do? I had little apprehension that at the end of the hour so confidently assigned, Charlotte would keep her promise to produce her brother with *peccavi* on his lips, or that I should see either of them any more that evening. My idea about it was, that determined to vindicate himself at last—determined now that he had a hold upon life to keep it against aspersion, and, above all, not to let suspicion of his honesty stand between him and even such faint hopes of me as he had declared—he would spare no details to convince Charlotte of the truth of his story; that then he would quit the house; while as for his sister—bitter as the trial would be for her—she would be only too glad of a long solitude, to break or mend under the revelation.

But though I was probably safe for to-night, to-morrow would come, and what should I say to Mr. Lamont? Well do I recall how the debate on this momentous question went on—or rather roundabout in circles like other storms—and how I made portraits of him at my writing-table all the while, till I had covered a sheet of paper with his effigies unconsciously. And this is what I thought:—

"I am sure he loves me very much. Nobody in the world cares for him. I do—a little—because I think it's a shame! Everybody has lots of people to care for, excepting him and me. Only I have seen no one but madame, and Charlotte, and the girls, and Mr. Denzil"—(Here I impatiently scratch out the portrait I am engaged on, which stands for scratching out the thought of Mr. Denzil)—"while *he* has been all over the world, and it is just the same! Do I like him very much? Suppose I were never to see him again?—suppose he were to die? Should I grieve exceedingly?" (I imagined a great grief, and found I should

not.) "Well, *that's* a shame! For he does love me! No one cares for him. Even *I* don't! But this I know, he would be very happy if I did! He is so clever too: I believe he could do anything, or be anything, if he really tried; and I *should* like to see him become rich and prosperous—all through me! And it would be *all* through me, every bit. Would not madame be glad! I fancy myself going to her with him, taking that little black book and a great deal of money, and 'Here's your book again, madame; and now for a receipt and a bonfire!' She'd never have done kissing me! But he will not try if I say he isn't to speak to me any more; and oh dear, I wish he had never seen me—though then, of course, he'd have gone to kill or be killed in the Caucasus! Still, it is very hard for me. If he had not said anything about marrying——" (Unconsciously I cease drawing, and write Wife!—The word starts up at me as if it were alive; and I kill it instantly with a thousand scribbles. Wife! it was as if I had been called upon to become five-and-twenty and a saint directly.) "He did not consider what he was talking about, and I'll say No. I'll say, You must not speak of this again at present. 'Perhaps' is the word he wants me to give him, apparently, and it is not much. But suppose I had to answer to myself the very *very* thing I feel, what would it be? Well, then—I like him because no one else does, because he has been so unfortunate, because he loves me, because he *depends on me*, who am only a girl; and if I can only love him a little more by and by, he shall not go back into his bad ways through me. I'll say—Yes!"

These last words were uttered aloud; and starting up at the sound of my own voice, I caught the reflection of a face so flushed and full of fire, that I was ashamed of it, and sat down again.

But though thus rebuked out of existence for a moment, the decision came quickly back to take possession of my mind. Not undisturbed, however; for what was my duty to Mr. Denzil? Calmer reflection, and the memory of his most kind letter, showed me that I could do nothing properly without his sanction, especially as Arthur Lamont's letters (no secrets now!) cast too much suspicion on my gratitude, candour, modesty. But Arthur's altered prospects and the explanation of his past life changed everything; or whether they changed Mr. Denzil's opinion or not, I could do without shame all my heart prompted—which was: To answer Mr. Lamont as I had answered myself, *because it was the truth*. Not that I would see him again to-morrow—how could I? I would write down what I had to say, and Lisabeth should give him the paper; and he should understand that I would not try to like him better than I did if he could not convince Mr. Denzil and madame that I wasn't foolish to encourage him. Now I felt pretty sure that he could.

After this recital, it is not necessary to explain how well I succeeded in diverting my mind from vain and fretful speculations as to what was passing above stairs between brother and sister. Indeed, by this time their quarrel had been pushed to a very distant place in my thoughts,

spite of a momentary haunting expectation of hearing Arthur Lamont come down from the interview. At frequent intervals throughout these disorderly cogitations, which here appear so brief and methodical, I fancied I heard his footsteps on the stairs: and why did I not? The hour had passed long ago; as I discovered when, on attempting to write my note to Mr. Lamont, so as to dispose of his solicitations at once, I found the evening had slipped on so far that it had become too dark to guide a pen.

Moreover, on looking about me I saw that the aspect of everything had changed. Within the gloom was sulky and cold; without—at the coming of darkness all the beauty of the day had gone. Overhead, swift blue-black clouds were rushing upon the yellow west: below in the garden, branches tossed and whirled at the mere threatenings of the wind (for no wind could be heard), like scared horses tossing their manes; while as for the little bushes, the fast-closing gloom made them look as if they were huddling together for fear of being scattered.

There is nothing new in such a sight as this, but there is always something that seems ominous. To-night it brought to my mind a crowd of vague forebodings—passing in and out like ghosts in a city of ghosts. While these went about their business in my heart, I looked upon the restive trees and the trooping clouds till looking became listening; and then I was dismayed indeed. Not only without the house, but within it, I could hear no sound! It was as if the whole world had been stricken breathless. This may have been because I listened with such eagerness for one sound—Arthur's voice or Charlotte's; but if *anything* had been audible to my over-reaching senses, I should have been pacified. Nothing, however, was audible to me.

There is a silence which palpitates in horrible quick time; defend me from it! That evening I learned what it is too well. Do you listen to *it*?—or does it listen to *you*? I do not know; but I am sure of this, the operation might very well drive one mad, if it lasted long. I tried my best to endure it, but could not for more than a few minutes; still less because, when I asked myself what it was or what it meant, I fancied it a part of a yet more intense and dreadful silence flowing through the house from that room where Arthur and Charlotte were!

I went to my door, unlocked it with a thief's care, and passed out to listen in the hall. There I quite expected to learn something strange and terrible, for by this time the vague bodings I have spoken of had become clear and confident; and therefore it was like waking from a dream to see Lisabeth coming downstairs with her customary deliberation, murmuring her hymns. "There is a fountain filled with blood," sang she, in her crooning, quavering old voice—a hymn I never heard without wanting to cry, or without being lifted away into a solitude, from all my troubles apart. And now one familiar, softening sound reaches me, so do many more. The clock in the hall begins to tick; there is a clattering of pans in the dairy kitchen; the wind rushes past audibly enough; and the

"coop, coop" of a cow-boy is blown in at an open door. All is well in the world, then—it goes on. Lisabeth—who has been upstairs—proceeds upon her household errands undisturbed; and what she sings is that at the worst "There is a fountain filled with blood," to renew them that are wicked, or suffer and die.

This time I thought the hymn should have its way with me. I went back to my room *intending* to cry, in order to break up the oppression of too much care, too much thought, which had almost stopped the beating of my heart. And I did cry; though, of course, there was no more grief in my tears than in the rain which now fell in a close, swift shower. We began at about the same moment, I think—the shower and I; but it was my privilege to leave off first, and to be soothed not only by my own tears, but by the sound of those other drops plashing on the leaves without.

Always unreasonable in such matters, I cannot help thinking, to this day, that my little paroxysm of terror was not wholly hysterical, or the consequence of overstrained emotion. I believe, almost, that that palpitating silence in horrible quick time *was* a part of something more intense and dreadful, flowing from the room where Charlotte and Arthur were; and when I come to relate what happened there, it will not be difficult to mark the moment when a dreadful silence *did* fall between them at any rate.

But whether it be called hysteria, or some indefinable intelligence, the feeling passed away as I have described, leaving me only so much calmer—for the time. How stupid have I been! thought I. If it were possible to see those two, I should probably find that instead of murder being done, they had simply quarrelled and worried out an explanation which (thanks to me for a meddler!) was not new to Charlotte when he began it; and that all being discovered, they were gradually talking themselves into a spirit of reconciliation. Mr. Lamont could not fail to show that he had acted very tenderly by his sister; while, as for the rest, they had been mutually deceived: which was a reason why they should end their conversation by becoming more friendly, and not more angry. For my part, I would take care, in future, to be as kind to Charlotte as ever I could. Meanwhile, it was a pity I had left off thinking of my own difficulties with Mr. Lamont to fill my head with troublesome fancies: suppose I took pen and paper and considered my note to him? That would be pleasanter pastime than getting frightened and hysterical without reason.

So, in defence of myself, I drew the curtains, and lit my lamp, and deliberately began,—“Dear Mr. Lamont.” This was easily written; so easily, that before I was aware, I had written it three or four times over, like a school-room copy. Commencing anew, I got no further than “your last request;” indeed, I only succeeded in discovering beyond doubt that the attempt was useless—that I was nerveless, fevered, utterly distraught. Then I would do as Lisabeth did in like circumstances. She comforted herself with hymns, so would I. There was a piano in my

room (as there was in almost every room in the house, of one sort or another), and a book of hymns, with music. I need not sing and play loud, but to myself very softly. That would pass the time away *safely* until the supper hour, when I must learn something of Charlotte and her brother, and so end a suspense haunted by wild images which were no sooner banished than they came back again.

Naturally enough, I opened the book at the hymn Lisabeth had been humming, and had already struck the first notes when the old lady came hastily to the door.

"Miss Charlotte will be glad to see you in the drawing-room, if you please."

Now when I declare that I should not have been surprised had Lisabeth said, "If you please there's somebody dead in the drawing-room," how welcome this commonplace message was will be plain enough. "Glad to see me in the drawing-room!" Then they were reconciled! Care expired with one great gasp; and off I hurried, joyfully thinking to myself, "Is not this always the way? Dread much, have little fear! Overmuch hope is a dupe, and overmuch fear a fool."

I enter the room, which is very large and gloomy by night. It is lit now by two candles, and as these stand at either end of the mantel-piece, little of their light falls upon the two figures seated at a table beyond the centre of the room. But they are distinct enough when the first shock of surprise is over. Charlotte sits erect. Her brother is prostrate: his arms folded upon the table and his face hidden on them!

Plainly, this was not a scene of reconciliation, but of bitter conquest and bitterer defeat.

"Margaret," says Miss Lamont, with a monstrous composure, "I have not succeeded so quickly as I boasted I should, you see. The hour has expired long since; but Mr. Lamont had a tedious story to tell, and he was obstinate and desperate naturally. Won't you take a chair?—well, you need not be detained to hear the story, for you know it already. The contradiction is briefer, of course."

Here she ceased, looking towards her brother as if it was now his turn to speak. But he made no sign: none except a sign of anguish, for his hands were clenched so tightly that his arms quivered under the strain.

"Mr. Lamont does not speak," Charlotte continued, presently, "and so I must talk for him. He wishes you to understand *now*—since I have discovered and explained certain things to him—that Mr. Wilmot was not a scoundrel; and that he made a serious mistake when he represented him to you as anything of the kind. Is it not so, Arthur?"

Still he never moved.

"One word—I must and will have it! Do you speak *this* time? Or shall I go on? You had courage enough—then! Lift up your face and admit it's you who are false!"

He obeyed her; only in lifting up his face he shaded it with both his hands.

"Margaret, for your sake I do as I am bid; let that suffice. Heaven will judge us in his own day . . . let that suffice!"

With this, his head sank upon the table again; while Charlotte (herself glad to terminate an interview which was wringing the last drop of blood from her heart) said with a last effort, "There, Margaret, you understand the case. First, Mr. Lamont consents to be maligned for *my* sake, and when he is no longer permitted to enjoy that merit, he maligns himself for *your* sake. Let that suffice!"

I afterwards remembered that not once from the moment I entered the room to the moment I quitted it, did Charlotte Lamont, any more than Arthur, look me in the face. At the time, indeed, I noticed nothing consciously; and the scene was so brief, so strange, so startling, that when I got fairly back into my own little retreat—the lamp burning, the music open on the piano, all so *natural*—I scarcely knew whether I had not been tricked by my senses. Reflection, even then, was quite out of my power; or how was it that, instead of trying to understand what I had or had not seen, what I had or had not heard, I went to the piano and continued the hymn, just as if the interruption had been trivial and momentary?

But here I am a little confused, because next day it was found that I had taken Charlotte's malady, and had a rambling mind. And may be, because that same mind was already overburdened and could bear no more, an instinct of self-preservation stifled all power of thinking, and led me to sit down and go on with my hymn. Or may be I was under more blessed guidance, that made me sing it to save *him* from self-destruction. Or may be it is all a delusion of a mind which had begun to ramble already. But it is so real to me, that now again I can hear myself quietly singing those verses from end to end,—

There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief—

But they need not be repeated. When they are done I stand and tremble in the silence that follows. And I fancy I hear a sobbing at my window; and I pull aside the curtains; and there is Arthur Lamont kneeling on the ground with the rain beating upon him, and his face laid upon the stone sill. The outpouring light startles him; he looks up, and what a terrible painful face it is, the lamp shining full upon it—a white mask upon the black night!

Since he extends his hands to me, what can I do but open the window? I open it, and the rain beats in upon me also.

"Oh Margaret, Margaret, I'll live! I came here to look at you through the window if I could, or if not, to kiss the wall, before I killed myself. And *you*, you who know nothing, commence to sing your innocent

hymns and drive the temptation away! I'll live, but how miserable I am! One of these days you shall learn—when I am dead, and gone to reckon with Him for my sufferings here! Bid me farewell! Kiss me—not for love, dear child—for forgiveness!”

And I pity him so much, and am altogether so bewildered, that I kiss him. The rain comes driving in, and I close the window, for he is gone.

What happened to me after that I am still less clear about. Some there are who, in trying times, faint away body and spirit; others there are from whom the spirit seems rather to depart, or to take refuge in some secret chamber in the brain, while the senses continue to carry on the business of living, by the mere accumulated impulse of wont and use. I think I must belong to the latter class; for though this scene eclipsed my last glimmer of consciousness, I got to bed without exciting suspicion that anything extraordinary had happened. Lisabeth afterwards remembered, indeed, that I looked “peculiar,” when she passed me, candle in hand, upon the stairs—so peculiar that she did not like to speak to me; but she had good reasons for knowing I might have been “put out,” and did not wonder much at a very white face or a pair of bright eyes “like artificial.” What I remember only are two things: first, an exquisite sense of refreshment when my burning face was laid upon the cold pillow; and next, my waking in the night. To fall to sleep as I did was grateful beyond description—to wake as I did, more terrible than words can tell; but what I saw when I woke must be prefaced by an explanation of what was going on between Charlotte and her brother, while contagion and mental disorder were surely preparing for me the fever which was blown to a flame through that open window. How I came to know what did pass between them is explained by Arthur Lamont's last words,—“One of these days you shall learn——”

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE DUELLISTS.

I HAVE said in what mood these two went into the house together—pale, with heads downcast, and hearts full alike of passion and of mis-giving: though as for Charlotte, determined neither to forgive nor to believe. They went to the room where I found them, where they sat down, I fancy, like duellists who fight over the table where they have quarrelled at cards. *They* quarrelled with a game at which neither had won: it was an invisible devil who held the winning hand.

“Begin,” said Charlotte.

But it seems that, whether from cowardice, or from guilt, or from an over-tenderness of heart, even then Arthur Lamont hesitated. But indeed

he had reason enough to do so without being either guilty or a coward ; or, perhaps—half believing, as he did, in a fate constantly mocking and adverse—he felt that a crisis had come too tempting for the mocker, and that the interview might end in an evil way for him after all.

"Begin," said she, "or do you prefer to spare yourself the humiliation of repeating your mean and foolish fables to *me* ? Plead guilty at once, and have done with dishonesty !"

He replied that if he hesitated it was only to spare her ("That ruse is discovered !" she exclaimed, interrupting him), and warned her that she had better be content to believe or to doubt as much as she had already heard, than insist on a vindication which would cost him much pain to make, and her more to listen to. She laughed ; answering, she supposed the pain he talked of was self-contempt for his share, and shame for hers.

"But may be," she continued, "you will contrive to find an easier way out of the difficulty—the difficulty, I mean, of substantiating your inventions—if I tell you that Miss Forster is really nothing but a governess now."

"What then ?"

"Why, then, there is no longer a prospect of her endowing any one with Mr. Denzil's fortune, and you need descend to artifice no longer to secure it. Do I speak clearly ? Because I wish to show you that your plans are futile as well as wicked: though they were always too plain to succeed. Still, I could not have dreamed that you would have been base enough to make for yourself a false character out of the ruins of your friend's honour. You might have spared yourself the pains, too. Margaret was ignorant of the particulars of your career ; she knew nothing of the folly (as I suppose you call it) which you have endeavoured to turn into romance by fixing it as villany on him."

"She knows it all now, at any rate."

"Your account of it, which you are about to oblige me by contradicting."

"Pardon me ; that is not the errand which brought us into this room."

"But you will comply before you leave it, I am persuaded."

"And if I do not ?"

"Why then—but let me first explain why I insist. Nearest to my heart is the determination that his good name shall be cleared by the voice that slandered it."

"In other words, you are determined not to believe you were deceived eighteen years ago."

"I *am*, on any testimony but his own, and that I shall never see. Next, it is my duty, as well as my mother's, not to allow Margaret Forster to be deluded into running away with Poverty, even though Poverty be Arthur Lamont ; and that also will be best accomplished by your admitting that you have practised on her sympathies by maligning a truer man than yourself."

"That is for our discussion presently. But you have not said what is to happen if I do not comply."

"In that case I shall ask you to prove your truth; or else to secure the poor girl whom you have already half-ruined—yes, half-ruined!—for what do you think has induced Mr. Denzil to abandon his guardianship of her but a dread of being marked down as a prey by adventurers?—to secure her, I say, from *absolute* ruin, by keeping your word never to see her again; and to keep it either in another country or in a debtor's prison! I am in earnest, you see—as a woman usually is who has been outraged. Choose between proof, denial, or arrest."

"I choose proof. And if, in doing so, I give you pain, remember that you put me to the trial. Consider that if you loved Godfrey Wilmot, I love Margaret Forster, governess or no governess. He trifled with you—she cares not for me; but I value her good opinion as well as you cherish what you call his good name, and I will not permit that she think me a rascal because you would have him thought to be heroic; or even because it is my misfortune to have punished him."

"Punished him!"

"Too much, my sister!"

"And here," says Mr. Lamont, from whom this narration came long afterward, when all was over and done, as his misfortunes were, "she had so dreadful a look, and my own conscience smote me so sorely, that I was in danger of giving in yet once more. Though truth be expelled with a fork, it returns; and I believe that from the beginning, my unhappy sister half anticipated what she would not be convinced of. When I said I had punished you know whom (Heaven forgive me!), perhaps *all* the truth rushed into her mind. What do we know?"

Arthur Lamont then took from his pocket a satchel, which contained, among other things, a certain soft leathern purse: the other things were two letters—one sealed, the other open. These he placed upon the table ceremoniously—"watching my sister's face, with a desperate hope that she herself would yield the dispute where it stood, and remain in doubt rather than encounter the proof when it appeared thus formidably arranged before her. The distress which I myself felt I saw plainly reflected in her, which encouraged me to trifle with those things—placing and displacing them, folding and unfolding papers, pretending to search my pockets for others. 'If I delay a little while,' thought I, 'she will break down; and then I can reserve all this for madame, who can reveal it to her more kindly—as much of it as she pleases.' But I overdid my part. Charlotte either detected my purpose or misinterpreted it; and 'Go on!' said she, looking up and trying to smile. 'If you are not afraid, I am not.' The time had come: there was no help for it.

"Do you know whose writing is this," said I, showing her the open letter at a distance.

"His, or a forgery."

"Of that you shall judge at leisure presently. But if it is *not* a

forgery, you behold here what you thought never to see—Wilmot's own testimony to the truth."

"The truth of what? That he cheated you—robbed you at play?"

"That he dealt ill with me in money matters!"

"And does the same paper contain a confession that he wilfully tricked and betrayed a gentlewoman?"

"By implication, without doubt."

"Implication is a juggler's word, and without doubt your confession is forged! Other men have been base enough to do what you accuse him of, but no man ever avowed the baseness."

"Have patience; you will be convinced only too soon. What do you think of this watch?"

"I think it very pretty. Did Captain Wilmot steal it?"

"It is a lady's watch, as you see! Look at the initials at the back. W. stands for Wilmot, but M. does not begin Godfrey!"

"That I have learned, but what is it you wish me to understand further?"

"The watch belonged to Wilmot's wife! He married within two months after your engagement ended."

What unutterable mortification this intelligence must have been to her, we know; but was it a surprise? I doubt. If she was hit, she did not fall. She took the watch into her hand with little appearance of curiosity; but she could not conceal the pallor of her face, and her voice was faint when she said, after a silence,—

"What else?"

"Nothing, if you are convinced."

"Convinced?" she repeated, in a tone which I had not learned to interpret yet, "I have to see the confession first. Your words prove nothing. This trinket proves nothing."

"Nor this?" and here I exhibited the sealed letter, whereon was written (as you know, Margaret), "For my daughter, Magdalen Wilmot?"

A different thing this! Now the unhappy woman my sister rose up, and stood trembling like a spear cast into the ground.

"Arthur, it is my turn to warn *you*! Carry the plot no farther: this is not Godfrey's writing!"

"Or rather, it is what you persuade yourself he could not have written."

"I am persuaded that I know his hand. He never wrote in this careful and tremulous way. It is a fabrication!"

"Pardon me, I will explain. He wrote love-letters to you—neither careful nor tremulous, as may be well understood. This is a love-letter of another sort—to his daughter."

"And how should a letter to his daughter get into your possession? When?"

"I am coming to that, Charlotte, since you will have it. On the day when I got this bullet in my side!"

You ask, what need was there that I should distress my sister with that miserable episode? This need: she would never have believed me had I not shown her his letter—it was all my proof; and his letter (you have it, Margaret, and may see) itself reveals that it was written the night before our fatal encounter. And I thought it kinder, safer, to prepare her by hints for what must otherwise greet her in his own hand, and in the very first line.

But Charlotte did not understand me yet; though of course she could not avoid the suggestion that Captain Wilmot had been killed: a shock severe enough, no doubt.

"Am I to understand, then," said she, firmly restraining her emotion, "that he was with the French army in Algeria like yourself? And do you mean——? Go on, Arthur."

"I mean that Wilmot was a captain of my regiment in Algeria; and that there came a night when he had reason to think of his daughter, and of the injuries he had done me. It was then he wrote what you see; next morning he carried it to the ground in his bosom. His handwriting careful and tremulous?—yes! That question is answered; and also how a letter addressed to his daughter should come into my possession. The packet which contained these things, he sent to me as I lay wounded, as he lay dying—together with a sacred message of injunction, unfulfilled yet. He sat up to see it brought to me over that fatal thirty paces; as I received it we looked at each other for the last time."

I thought my unhappy sister would have swooned at this moment; but in another she had recovered herself, desperately struggling back into unbelief.

"Over that fatal thirty paces!" said she. "Now you spoil the story again. It is well conceived for a young girl like Margaret, but, between ourselves, it is too romantic. No doubt, Captain Wilmot must go to Algeria to give you a chance of murdering him in such a way that nobody learns anything about it, but what should take him there?"

"Do not deceive yourself, Charlotte," said I. "It is useless to *pretend* to be incredulous."

"Is it?" she exclaimed in a terrible voice, too significant of the rage and fear which she no longer endeavoured to conceal. "Do you seriously wish me to believe you did murder that man?"

Then I gave her the letter. As for me, I knew every line of it by heart—from the melancholy, "If I go down before your weapon to-morrow, Lamont—and I believe I shall"—at the beginning, to the solemn "God forgive me and protect my poor little girl" at the end; and though Charlotte took the letter to a window to read it, standing with her back toward me, I imagined I could see every word entering her mind.

She read, but she did not return to the table. Again she read, breaking off more than once to gaze out of window, in what I could but think were intervals of poignant misery—as doubtless they were. I cursed my unhappy fate; I pitied her with all my heart; and was picturing how

terrible a spectacle it must be when so stubborn a heart as hers gave way, when she came back to her seat looking more horribly composed even than you saw her look when you entered the room.

"I am not satisfied," said she.

"Not satisfied!"

"And I propose that we send for Margaret Forster at once to hear the denial I promised myself and her."

"You are mad, Charlotte. Why will you persist in the face of reason and justice?"

"Because, if you please, I persist."

"Then I have no more to say."

"Indeed, you have—for Margaret Forster's sake. If you do not avow that you have traduced her father, I will tell her you have murdered him!"

This, then, was what my sister had been cogitating in those bitter intervals. Looking out on the threatening night with his letter in her hand, she had seen more in ten minutes than I had guessed at in half as many months—much as I had thought of you, Margaret.

But no sooner had she uttered these words than I knew she was right. In a moment I heard again your voice, calling to me when I was so angry with madame at Brighton, on the beach there: the voice so like his that it touched me then, just as it convinced me now. Convinced, and crushed. Charlotte talked on, but little that she uttered reached my ears. What was it to me? What she had revealed had passed through me like a blaze of light, illuminating and destroying in a moment all the aspirations of those later days—all the happiness I had or hoped for. If I possessed a mind any longer, it was like a forest that fire has traversed, leaving nothing behind it but red smoke and black ashes.

What need of more? I was conquered, and gave in. Not for my life would I have you know, as yet, that the man of whose infidelities I had talked so glibly that you yourself cried out on him—not for my life would I have you discover that he whom I had followed to Algeria, and provoked and killed, was no other than your father. Already you were lost to me—that was settled when he fell. I could not knowingly offer you the hand which was stained that morning. But you need not hate me, I thought, till I was dead, and dead you *would not* hate me. The denial to-night then, since Charlotte insisted, and death to-morrow.

The end I need not tell. You remember how you were called to the room and what you saw and heard; you remember who sang a hymn which saved me from suicide; and now you know why it is that I have been unfaithful to his dying injunctions all these years: because I could not endure that you should think ill of me. As for the rest—you have not waited long.

Here Arthur Lamont comes to an end. Of course I was in utter ignorance of the details that night. All I knew was what I myself had seen and heard; but these particulars, taken from my after-knowledge, are

necessary to explain so much of my history as leaves me without a lover to dispose of, and with a fever eager to dispose of me.

Arthur Lamont had gone his despairing way through the rain and darkness, and Charlotte brooded awake in her room, and I slept fitfully in mine. Charlotte brooded awake, I say, for how could she sleep? I know a reason, for one; she was longing to pry into the face which she had not courage to glance at a little while ago, with all her coolness and self-command. She thought, perhaps, that if she could read my features undisturbed, she could learn for certain whether I was Captain Wilmot's daughter or no; or (sure of that already) she was impatient to recall anew the looks of the man whose deceitful love she had cherished so obstinately; or may be she longed to stamp upon her heart some image of my mother's face, to hate it.

Meanwhile, I was dreaming. Because of the heat and fever of my blood, that ran ringing with speed through every vein, I dreamed first of our garden trees tossing in the rain, and then of the forest where I was born, and then of the brook which led me dancing into an adventure at once strange and terrible. Never forgotten, but set aside as "stupid" whenever a thought of it intruded, the whole scene was now repeated in my dreams. A child again, there I sit by the stream (it was an open window with the rain blowing in at first) watching the water as it rolls over the worn white stones, or thrids the sedges with a tangle of sweet whispers. And there am I, my shoes laced round my neck, leaping down the brook from stone to stone, or wading along the pebbly bottom. It is open glade on either side. It is dense underwood—thick sedges below, with boughs growing close above; and the brook and I have to make a great rustling as we push our way through. It is a pool enclosed in the copse; and right above it stands the moon. I plunge into the pool, but its waters flow round my limbs without touching to cool them. I try to drink, with my lips held to the surface; and a strange beautiful white face comes up and kisses them. It kisses them, and I sink to the bottom of the pool, which will neither cool me nor give me to drink. I rise again, and now, instead of the moon, the beautiful white face looks down on me from the clouds. I am not afraid, and say, "Who are you, shining there?" The answer I get is nonsense, "Like her!" hisses along the water seemingly, and then I wake.

I wake, and my room is full of fire. It is in a glow like a furnace, with ten thousand thousand threads of light darting from side to side; and who stands there white and cold in the midst of the red heat? It is Charlotte! I know her, though she has got so monstrously tall and great; and I cry out that she is a witch, for it is she who is weaving and weaving those threads of flame. She holds a distaff, such as I have seen in prints; and as she whirls it in her hand, the myriad threads dart out from it into the air. "You are a witch!" I cry. "You have drowned your brother, and now you burn me! But when the time comes, you shall be burnt to everlasting!"

Poor me ! What I really behold is nothing but this unhappy woman standing at my bedside with a candle in her hand. After midnight, finding she could not rest till she had taken a long look at that Magdalen Wilmot whom *he* had remembered so tenderly in his dying hours (when she herself was forgotten, apparently, notwithstanding all the verses he had written and she had committed to heart), Charlotte had stolen into my room to feed her imagination through her eyes. And it was she, probably, who had said under her breath (for the voice certainly hissed), "Like her !" thinking of my mother.

As soon as I started up in my bed to upbraid the witch, she vanished; and then followed a darkness so dense that it was like the silence in which I was entranced a few hours before. The one recalled the other ; and that recalled the ticking of the hall-clock ; and then I found myself clinging to the pendulum of Time itself—a huge beam which swung in space, and beat order for the planets and Life and Death. Swing ! and we swept this way with a noise like that of a rocket. Swing ! and we rushed back again, swifter and farther than a falling star. Sometimes I thought I was bound to this mighty pendulum as a punishment for having addressed Lisabeth's letter ; sometimes it appeared that I had been appointed to take charge of it and keep it ticking, so that it might never stop again, to distract poor girls with a palpitating silence. But whether by destiny or free will, there was I clinging to the pendulum, and swinging with it through maddening miles of space and darkness unutterable ; and there I might have swung still, if the moon—no, not the moon, but the beautiful face had not burst through the night, and startled me, so that I lost my grasp, and fell head-long into the infinite abyss.

How far I should have fallen who can tell, if Lisabeth and her maids had not heard me scream ? But they did hear me and hastened to my assistance. They caught me up, and satisfied me after some difficulty that I was restored to the bed I had never stirred in ; at the same time satisfying themselves that I had become delirious with a fast-consuming fever.

And that is the end of it—the end of one half of my life. When I shut down the window upon Arthur Lamont's retreating footsteps, the curtain fell upon another act in the drama ; when it rose again I was already in new scenes, and very sweet and peaceful they were.
